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FASCISTS AND FANATICS

THE British Government must not make the crowning error of dumping into Germany the 4,350 Jews now packed in the holds of three small ships. If these Jews are forcibly put on to German soil amid scenes which cannot but bring discredit to Britain, the world will not recall that they are fanatics who see a return to the Promised Land as their only salvation; it will not be interested in the acrimonious debate now going on between the Quai d'Orsay and Whitehall; it will not be impressed, in fact, by any of the excuses made by the British. It will merely notice that these unhappy people, survivors from Hitler's concentration camps, are being put back into camps not far from Belsen.

A British observer who was recently at Port de Bouc has sent us a graphic description. He denies foreign press allegations of cruelty or misbehaviour on the part of British soldiers, but reports that the condition of the Jews in the stifling holds of these ships was necessarily shocking, and that there was much talk of "frying them out." The ships are not "prison ships"; but the word is natural, since cages are erected to prevent the Jews from throwing themselves into the sea. Our correspondent fears mass suicides if the Jews are landed on German soil. Even if tragedy is avoided, Britain can gain nothing by choosing Germany as a dumping ground. If it is prestige that we have in mind, any other place in the world is preferable. We should gain prestige everywhere by sending these ships to Cyprus.

The British dilemma in Palestine is of our own making. Indecision over many years, the usually unacknowledged motive of strategy, the betrayal by British Labour leaders of their own promises to the Jews (which went, in our view, beyond what was just or wise), the rejection of the Anglo-American Report of 1946, which offered a promising interim solution to both Jews and Arabs—these have brought their inevitable penalty. One more Commission—this time of the United Nations—is to report. Whatever its conclusion, we hope the British will cease to maintain a lonely army behind barbed wire defences in a country where neither Jews nor Arabs want us. Partition, supported for a time by an international police force, seems the only feasible solution. Britain cannot afford this wasteful and shaming responsibility.

One inevitable result of the Palestine misery, where repression breeds murder and murder further repression, is the rapid growth of anti-Semitism in this country. Fascists are naturally making all the capital they can from it. The article contributed to this issue by Mr. Woodrow Wyatt, M.P., is a careful and first-hand account of meetings he attended in the East End last Sunday. We believe it will surprise and shock many readers. Decent people of all political parties will realise the significance and the danger of a movement in Britain which bases itself on anti-Semitic slogans and in Hitlerite language vilifies Parliament and democratic institutions.

Most serious of all is the attitude of the police. We noticed that a London magistrate, when some anti-Fascists were recently brought before him, asked why the Fascist platform was not also in the dock. This is a matter to which the Home Secretary and the British Government as a whole must immediately pay attention. We hope never to hear again the silly talk about Britain having "too much sense of humour" and too much "political stability" ever to have its politics bedevilled by a Fascist movement. The British are as liable as anyone else to this disease if the virus finds suitable economic and political conditions. We have, however, one great safeguard. Millions of Labour supporters in this country have watched and learnt the lesson of the Weimar Republic.

Negative Approach

In the absence of any alleviation from the intolerable cost of Britain's armed forces, the new—but evidently not the last—instalment of crisis cuts is depressing without being decisive. The 15 per cent. reduction in the meat ration and in restaurant allocations follows logically from the £144 million food import cut previously announced; and the total suppression of travel abroad and of motoring for pleasure adds perhaps £30 millions to foreign exchange savings. Barely one-third of the gap is yet bridged.

We do not question the need for retrenchment. Sir Wilfrid Eady returned from Washington with empty pockets (save for plain-spoken American advice); and Mr. Snyder has disavowed any intention by the U.S. Treasury to waive the "non-discriminatory" provisions of Article 9 of the Loan Agreement. (He even says that Sir Wilfrid did not make any such proposal!) Moreover, Empire sources will not avail quickly to offset the loss of the £300 millions' worth of U.S. products (over half of them being food and raw materials) which we obtained in the past twelve months exclusively out of borrowed dollars.

By themselves, restrictions are a negative approach to the problem. There is a grave lack of urgency in the Government's approach to the much more vital task of increasing production. The example set in the abortive negotiation between the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mine Workers is deplorable. To the Board's first proposal (for which the Government bears responsibility), that the working day should be lengthened from 7½ to 8 hours, the miners reasonably replied that this innovation would be unlikely to lead to greater output: it would be an excessive physical strain on the older miners and would, in any case, be unworkable without a technically difficult rearrangement of the length of stints (coal faces). Recognising, however, the imperative need for higher output, the N.U.M. offered to call on its members to work a 6½-hour shift every Saturday between September and May provided that this extra, voluntary shift were paid for at time-and-a-half, thus preserving the principle of the Five-Day Week.

The Board, acting on instructions, did not accept this seemingly generous offer. Or, rather, they made their acceptance conditional on the Union's agreeing that the bonus of one shift's extra pay to which miners are entitled if they work a full week of five shifts should in future be dependent on the working of six shifts. The Union apparently agreed that working the Saturday overtime shift should not qualify colliers for

the "six-for-five" bonus if they were absent from any one of the Monday to Friday shifts; but they pointed out that some miners would physically be unable to work six shifts, and that the Board's proposal meant that men who still worked the full five shifts between Monday and Friday would, in fact, be getting a cut of 17 per cent. in their wages. The Board's retort was that it would be uneconomic to open the pits on Saturdays (thus involving overtime maintenance work on Sundays) unless there were a guarantee that there would be a reasonably full attendance of miners on Saturdays. In this impasse the matter now rests. Through mistrust of the miners' good intentions, increase in coal output stands in jeopardy and the spirit of enthusiasm which nationalisation evoked in the coalfields is being dissipated.

Plans for Agriculture

Rapid increases of output cannot be expected from plans which depend on the revolving seasons and on the fertility of beasts; and no one can fairly blame Mr. Tom Williams if the year 1951-52, in which his target of a 20 per cent. expansion in British farm production is to be reached, looks a long way off. The objective which the Minister of Agriculture has set before farmers is obviously dictated by the dollar crisis: farmers' efforts must be concentrated on the production of livestock and foodstuffs most costly in foreign exchange. To provide the necessary feed, cereal crops must be maintained at a substantially higher level; and farmers are promised substantial guaranteed price increases, in addition to acreage payments and priority for rural houses and agricultural machinery. Where does efficiency come in? In the form either of increased Treasury subsidies or higher prices for food, the consumer will be called on to pay the piper; but unless the County Committees take a much tougher line with the inefficient or easy-going farmer, there is a danger lest the higher farming incomes now promised may defeat their object by encouraging complacency. There is, moreover, the big question whether even an agricultural minimum wage now raised to 90s a week will attract sufficient recruits to the land unless there are not merely more new houses, but large-scale reconditioning of existing sub-standard cottages, introduction of piped water-supplies and adequate sanitation.

Notes to Eastern Europe

There are two forms of Western "intervention" in Eastern Europe: one seems desirable and the other silly. If the Hungarian Government were candid, they would answer the American and British protest about their electoral preparations in some such terms as these: "We are building a new way of life here and intend to protect it, as you protect yours. All the Allies agreed that Fascism should not be allowed to return to Europe. If we decide to disfranchise certain groups of the electors until our new regime is on a firm basis, we shall only be following the universal precedent of revolutionary States, including Britain and America. In point of fact, if we wanted to disfranchise everyone of Fascist tendencies in Hungary—have you forgotten Hungary's record during the war?—the number to whom we refused the vote would be much greater. In any case, is it anything but hypocrisy for Americans to complain of people being deprived of the vote when, throughout the South, Negroes are tricked out of their constitutional right to vote, and beaten up if they attempt to exercise it?" Since the West has no reply to this counter-attack, the protest seems futile. On issues of civil liberty, however, where, in spite of grave infringements, the West has broadly established the principle of an independent judiciary and the rule of law, we believe that democrats may usefully make representations to Eastern European governments when they indulge in political trials whose purpose seems not justice but propaganda. We are glad to see that the Yugoslav Government has commuted Professor Furlan's death sentence to one of twenty years' imprisonment, and we hope that, in view of his excellent record in working for the Partisans both in England and America, it will not be long before he is released. In the same way we trust that the Bulgarian Government will see the wisdom of not executing Petkov, who, in the past, showed courage and energy on behalf of the new Bulgaria.

Cabinet Making in Greece

The stage is being methodically set for military intervention by the United States in Greece. Mr. Loy Henderson of the U.S. State Department talks in Washington of "drastic action," possibly before the meeting of the General Assembly, to meet the "threat to peace" on the Greek frontier. In Greece, Mr. Griswold, chief of the American Mission, is actively engaged in endeavouring to promote the formation of a new Greek Cabinet which could be a respectable front for further U.S. intervention. The fire-eating General Zervas—whose inflammatory violence, coupled with the complete failure of the campaign against the Partisans, led to the resignation of M. Maximos—must clearly be dropped: the repressive measures taken by the Minister of Public Order had disconcerted even the U.S. State Department. So M. Sophoulis has been pressed, so far vainly, to lead his Liberals into a coalition with the Populists of M. Tsaldaris. Such a coalition could be presented to Congress as a truly "national" government; and, particularly if it offered to the "rebels" an amnesty on terms whose rejection would be a foregone conclusion, it might have a better chance of calling successfully for American military aid against the Northern "threat." Such, as we see it, are the broad lines of American policy in Greece. In its issue of August 18, *Time* featured a photograph of two Greek Partisans endeavouring to identify the lopped heads of nine of their comrades decapitated by the forces which the U.S.A. is succouring. The photograph was captioned plaintively: "Now nobody is satisfied." Surely *Time's* caption-writer erred. At any rate, when it supplied the Monarchists with arms the State Department willed the means.

World Food Council

Having failed to secure international agreement on his original proposal for a World Food Board which was to trade in staple foods, Sir John Boyd Orr has been endeavouring at the F.A.O. Conference in Geneva this week to get a World Food Council established. Under its charter the Council would decide the bottom price at which countries would buy foodstuffs to build up stocks and the "ceiling" at which they would sell—the aim being by these means to secure stabilisation of prices over a period of years. Fifty nations, with Russia absent, are being asked to decide whether such a Council shall exist. The situation in which they are meeting is that, though harvests in Eastern Europe have been good, crops in Western Europe are indifferent and the food situation in Asia is still precarious. In the U.S.A., however, the surplus of cereals for export is between 30 and 40 per cent. higher than before the war, and the American farmer sees himself with an unmarketable abundance larger even than that which produced the farming slump whose onset was the prelude to the depression of 1929. The principle of a World Food Council seems likely, therefore, to be supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, despite Congressional opposition to any interference with freedom of trade. Objections have been raised by the British Government on the score that maintenance internationally of *minimum* prices might be disadvantageous to such a large consumer of imported food as Britain. The alternative, however, to regulation of prices by a world food administration might well be a price slump followed by severe restriction of output as disastrous in the long run to consuming as to exporting countries.

Treaty-making in the Pacific

Lord Addison and Mr. Hector McNeil are now in Canberra taking part in Commonwealth discussions as a preliminary to the wider Conference on a Peace Treaty with Japan. The chief spokesman will be Dr. Evatt, who will undoubtedly report on his recent visit to General Macarthur in Tokio. That he should have paid this visit on the eve of the Canberra Conference was an admission that the dominant role in the Pacific is now America's. In 1944 the strategy of the South Pacific was the subject of a Conference in Canberra, when Australia and New Zealand signed the Anzac Agreement making a regional zone of defence based on their two countries. To-day, even before a Peace Treaty is discussed, the balance of power in the Pacific has changed, Australia is well on the way to becoming an industrial nation, America has laid claim to the strategic islands of the South Pacific and may also claim the Ryuku and Bonin Islands. Japan herself is already reviving her industries with the generous support of General Macarthur. At a time when every consideration in foreign affairs seems to be based on atomic strategy, Australian co-operation is essential to American plans. But Japan might well become an economic rival to Australia. These were undoubtedly points of discussion between the General and Dr. Evatt, and they will find their way on to the agenda of the Canberra talks this week. They will be taken a stage farther when the governments represented on the Far Eastern Commission minus the U.S.S.R. meet next month in America. This conference on Japanese Treaty Procedure, called on the initiative of the U.S.A. on July 11th, was immediately regarded with suspicion by the Russians, who asked for a conference with the Foreign Ministers of China, Britain, the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. The American answer on August 13th suggested that the Far Eastern Commission was the appropriate body to discuss treaty procedure. Such a preliminary meeting of the ten Powers, without the U.S.S.R., would be taken as an acceptance of Mr. Hoover's thesis that, if the Russians do not agree to American proposals about procedure, the Japanese Treaty should be without the Soviet Union. The dangers are obvious, and it is to be hoped that the U.S.S.R. will yet decide to come to the preliminary discussions in Washington.

Pie in the Bogota Sky

The United States delegation at Rio seems to have dealt shrewdly with the problem of balancing South American need for dollars with North American desire for a defence pact. Mr. Marshall, who leads the delegation, has promised to discuss economic aid to "to-morrow," *i.e.*, at the Bogota Conference, which is to succeed the Rio Conference in January next year. Thus, most of the small countries, which are in sad need of dollars, realise that good behaviour now may bring them future advantages. The postponement of economic talks (which promised to be a very sore point) has been unanimously accepted, and progress is being made on framing a defence pact strictly along United States lines. Argentina is the only country which has put any obstacles in the way, and she seems to be unable to gather any more votes. The defence pact will not be very effective in itself, but the standardisation of arms on the U.S. model will give the State Department great power. Most of the Latin-American countries fear that, if they make too many conditions about the standardisation of arms, they will not get as much armament from the United States as their neighbours. But Mr. Marshall's success in Brazil may not be reflected at home. Congress has so far refused to implement the plan for standardising hemispheric armaments. The news of the two revolutions in South America this month will strengthen Senator Taft's conviction that such countries should not be trusted with any more guns than they already have. Congress may concur.

POSITIVE TRADE POLICY

In an otherwise confused economic situation one thing is crystal-clear: as a basis for international trade the "go as you please" system known as multilateralism is dead. The United States naïvely believed that it could reimpose on the world a trading mechanism which rested on the assumption that nations could, and should, sell their goods indiscriminately to other nations on the assurance that, in the end, they would automatically receive payment from some nation—at the far end, it may be, of a long chain of exchanges—who wanted the original vendor's goods. The belief has been exploded, the chain has been broken by the simple fact that the United States, nearly self-supporting in food and raw materials, is in a position in which she can supply not merely her own needs in manufactures but those of most of the rest of the world as well. The result was bound to be an almost world-wide shortage of dollars. Britain's decision to make the pound sterling once more inconvertible merely registered the fact that international trade on "ring o' roses" lines was defunct. It will take more than the voluminous and highly unrealistic trade charter evolved at Geneva to resurrect it.

We predicted the funeral as long ago as December, 1945, when the Dollar Loan Agreement, with all its impossible stipulations, was being debated by Parliament. In the accuracy, however, of our forecast we take no satisfaction: the burial of multilateral trade will not be of advantage either to Britain or to the world in general unless certain conditions are fulfilled; and of their fulfilment there is yet no very reassuring sign. General inability to trade on multilateral lines might easily lead to a dwindling of international exchanges as severe and as disastrous as that which followed the financial crisis of 1930. If all countries whose trading balance at present shows a deficit try to bridge the gap by cutting down imports, then nations which have surplus goods to export will find no market for them; the adoption generally of defensive policies of trade restriction will only serve to create general impoverishment. Yet this is only too likely to happen unless multilateral trade is replaced by a positive policy of trade expansion through bilateral exchanges. And such a policy has little chance of making much headway—at any rate outside the bloc of nations geared to the economy of the U.S.S.R.—unless Britain gives a lead.

Before such a lead can be given it is obvious that Britain must have a larger export *quantum*; and, unless the British people are to be condemned indefinitely to intolerably painful austerity, this means that there must be an expansion in British production. This the Government manifestly realises. However open to criticism its selection of means may be, no one can question that it sincerely wills the correct end. Unless the revised targets which it has set up for coal and steel production are reached, and there is a corresponding increase in productivity over the whole range of essential British manufacture, we shall have no option but to accept the imposition of import restrictions which will react disastrously on other countries, and from whose repercussions on ourselves we cannot rely on the Government's new agricultural programme effectively to shield us.

Increased production, however, solves only one side of the problem. It is no use making more goods, which we cannot afford to retain for our own use, if we cannot find people abroad to take them and to send us in return products which we must have in order to maintain a tolerable standard of life. This means that our production must be selectively planned. The collapse of multilateralism lends added force to the case which Mr. Christopher Shawcross, M.P., makes on a later page for a drastic scaling down of our present indiscriminately boosted production of motor cars for sale in a world which—outside the dollar area—stands in much greater need of steel rails, rolling stock and machinery. Yet, at the concluding session of the International Trade Conference at Geneva, Mr. Harold Wilson laid emphasis almost exclusively on the need for closer economic co-operation between Britain *and Empire countries*. He appeared to imply that Article 9 of the Dollar Loan Agreement, providing against trade discrimination, was a dead letter; but in warning the Conference that Britain might have to adopt "methods opposed to the principles" of multilateral trade, he had significantly little to say about possibilities of bilateral exchanges with countries outside the British Commonwealth. We were having talks with the Yugoslavs and "had had talks with the Russians"—not an inspiring declaration.

Something much more purposeful and positive is needed in the Government's foreign trade policy. If international trade is not to wither away to the desiccated level of the early 'thirties, we cannot afford to wait for a European Customs Union: we should approach individually every foreign country outside the dollar area and endeavour to negotiate with it a long-term agreement for the exchange of goods on a commodity basis, in which difficulties over financial means of payment need not arise. The temporary breakdown of the Moscow trade talks through British inability to promise the delivery of the goods which the U.S.S.R. wanted in exchange for wheat emphasises how imperative it is that our import-export trade should become a State monopoly, and that much more thoroughgoing steps should be taken to direct the nature of the products our factories turn out. But we see no alternative to this policy. The Dominions are doing all they can to meet our needs out of a sense of kinship. Outside the Commonwealth no such feelings towards Britain exist. If we are to get what we need, or even a little of what we need, from abroad, we must plan how to supply individual foreign countries with what they want.

WELL, IT'S A FREE COUNTRY—ISN'T IT?

Five policemen stood in a row behind the speaker. Ten formed a cordon in the road twenty yards ahead of him. Others were on the pavements, and more were among the crowd beyond the cordon. Round the inside of the ring formed by the policemen walked the Chief Superintendent in a smart grey suit, wearing a black homburg, and with a cigarette hanging from the side of his mouth. Sometimes he directed a policeman towards an interrupter in the crowd. Sometimes he made a cautioning sign to the speaker.

It was a fine morning for the meeting. If you looked only at the sun shining on the green trees on either side of the street, you could almost imagine that you were in a country market town instead of Bethnal Green. The speaker, too, had a kindly English face—a good honest working man. He was proud of his English birth. He explained to his audience that his ancestors were British and had always been so, without paying a nominal fee. He had a theory about Britain's economic position. It was due to international financiers, "and you all know who they are." It was due as well to the presence of so many aliens in the country. He had evidence to prove it. It came from a voice in the grave—a book published in 1906, a big blue book from which he quoted repeatedly and at length, without giving either the title or the author. Each extract contained names of Jewish financiers, who were up to no good in such towns as Johannesburg (commonly known as "Jewburg"). While he spoke there was little interruption and mild applause. When he finished, a short, tubby, dark man with a white face, who had been pacing up and down with the *Sunday Express* in his hand, mounted the rostrum. "Well, spivs," he began, "we all know this society," pointing at the placard labelled British League of ex-Servicemen, "is a sham. We are Fascists and we're proud of it. We are all Englishmen and we are not afraid of the nonentities, the sub-men who come round trying to break our meetings up. I love Mosley."

He had a great deal of other information to give the audience. Sir Oswald Mosley had not been to prison for black market offences. Mosley was not a traitor. He was less likely to be a traitor than Herbert Morrison, the conscientious objector. And what about "Ikey" Strachey, who would not buy food from Empire countries? We, free Englishmen, built the Empire. Why didn't we use it for our own benefit? Once we had men in the Government. Fifty years ago they sent the troops out to burn down Indian villages. As late as 1916 we opened the criminal lunatic asylums and sent the inmates as Black-and-Tans to rape the Irish women and kill the Irish men. Now Britain was a fifth-rate nation, dictated to by four thousand Jews afloat in British ships. There was only one way to stop terrorism. It was the way we would have done it in the old days. Take out whole Jewish families in Palestine and shoot them against a wall and do the same to Jewish families here.

The police shorthand writer, leaning against a wall, impassively took notes of this incitement to violence. Three-quarters of the crowd approved it. A few, who were regular attenders at such meetings, began to get restless. One had the temerity to shout several times: "Down with Fascism!" Three constables advanced towards him and removed him from the crowd. It was an offence to say "Down with Fascism" in England on August 24, 1947. The speaker continued. "I work with my hands," he said, "not with needle and cotton." He does: he works in a pin-table saloon in Hammersmith.

Now we were on a round tour of the world. He didn't want to offend any Catholics. He was a Catholic himself. But he must record that the opinion of a Vatican emissary who recently visited Germany was that the concentration camps were now no different from before, except that they had Russian guards instead of German. We never heard of the thousands of nuns who had been raped by the Russians. There had been no corpses at Belsen. That had been a lie told with the co-operation of newspaper photographers. The war was a mistake. We had fought against the great German race.

In the front of the crowd, standing between two policemen, stood a little Jew, shouting "Will you take a question? Mr. Speaker, will you take a question?" The policemen removed him and the speaker went on, with more noise and more shouts from the crowd. Whenever the shouting inconvenienced the speaker, the policemen glared at the interrupters. As the speaker remarked, "it's a free country." In and out of the spectators walked a wizened old working man, cleanly dressed, wearing a cloth cap and a spotted blue scarf tied neatly round his neck. He brandished a collecting box into which nearly everyone put something.

Round the corner another meeting was taking place: that of the Jewish ex-Servicemen's Association. There the crowd was not so large and not so friendly. "What about Palestine?" they shouted. "What about the two sergeants?" Patiently the speaker answered each question, and there were only two or three policemen to shield him if trouble broke out. To the audience it was unimpressive, wet Social Democratic stuff. Tired of baiting the young man trying to put a reasonable case, the crowd moved across to the racial hatred meeting, just in time to hear how Britain was to be run for the British and Britain put first. By now there were three hundred or so, reduced occasionally, whenever the police thought someone was too vociferous in his childish demand for an answer to his question.

The third speaker finished by announcing that, if the crowd had behaved as decent British men and women and listened quietly, he would have answered questions. When they learnt to conduct themselves properly he would. Somehow this misfired and while the police were looking

the other way a spectator got through the front cordon and stood below the rostrum, insisting that his question be answered. The speaker refused to listen, but in the confusion a youth behind got himself heard. "I am a Jew," he said, "and I am a Serviceman on leave." There was muttering in the crowd. "Well, he shouldn't be here. He shouldn't be taking part in political meetings." He held his Army pay book in front of him. "I am a Serviceman," he shouted again, "and I am on my way to Burma to look after you. What I want to ask is, what has the speaker seen of Palestine?" The speaker waved his Army pay book. "What is the date on yours? Mine is 1940. That's when I joined up." It was a safe bet for the speaker. The questioner looked too young to have much war service and not much like a regular. The crowd welcomed the taunt and the questioner fumbled over the pages of his book. Suddenly he glanced up and retorted "Mine is September 16, 1939." "We've never disputed," said the speaker, "that some Jews were in the Army." But there was no answer to the question and the meeting closed with the police driving the audience away and not allowing them to stop near anyone selling an anti-Fascist newspaper: the Fascist ones had been sold during the meeting.

At seven o'clock the same evening an orderly Communist, anti-Fascist meeting began a few miles away in Ridley Road. Two or three policemen were in the crowd and so were some Fascists, too heavily outnumbered to venture on much interruption. On the outskirts of the crowd of about a thousand stood sad Jewish women with their arms folded. Two hundred yards away, two or three thousand were listening to another Fascist meeting. The same man who spoke first in the morning was speaking again, and caressing the worn blue volume. "It's a lovely book," he crooned over it. "You don't like this book, do you? It was written before Mosley and before Hitler." The same interrupters were shouting their questions. The same Chief Superintendent was in charge. Many of the same policemen were there, but their numbers had been greatly increased. This time they were not so confident and were a trifle overawed by the crowd pressing against them on all sides.

Standing in the streets were ordinary working men, listening with attention and with approbation. "That's right," they said, as the speaker told them of the folly of making war against Germany. "That's right," they said, as he called for uprooting of "These people." "That's right," they said, as he denounced the House of Commons as an institution. After an hour and a half of it, the meeting became too much for the anti-Fascists. They surged through the police towards the speakers and the meeting ended in a brawl. The Fascist leaders sloped off. Their supporters started off towards the Communist meeting to break that up, shouting as they went, "Two, four, six, eight. Who do we appreciate? M-O-S-L-E-Y."

Perhaps it is not serious. Just a joke, as Mr. Ede seems to think. Perhaps it is of no importance that the Fascist meetings have been growing larger for the last six months; of no significance that they are now being held regularly in Brighton, in Liverpool, in the East End and other London districts; and that plans are being made to extend them further. Perhaps Mosley really means it when he says that he is not engaged in politics but in publishing his books through Mosley Publications; and maybe he will never come to the East End again. Perhaps there is no danger, if unemployment increases and the country's difficulties get worse, that Fascism will spread. They used to think that in the days of the Weimar Republic. Tolerance and free speech are our birthright. But there is a law about incitement to violence which the police of Bethnal Green and Dalston have apparently not been told about. Possibly Mr. Chuter Ede might care to spend a Sunday evening in the Ridley Road area and then look it up. He might muse a little on the desirability of Fascist organisations being allowed to sell their wares under the scrupulous protection of the police; and even consider legislation to forbid the fomenting of racial strife.

WOODROW WYATT

HUNGARY BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

To the House of Commons on June 19th, Hungary was a clear case—a faked plot framed by the Communists to introduce terror and dictatorship. But inside Hungary it is not so clear. The official White Paper on the plot is unconvincing: what does suggest that the plot was genuine is the political atmosphere of Budapest. No one doubts that there was a military plot between a Fascist Society and Hungarians outside—plots are political routine—or that there were intrigues inside the Smallholders Party which overlapped with it. The Right in general, even of his own party, blames Nagy for his ineptitude, not for being involved. The Left, of course, was waiting for it. As Anna Kethly points out, it is all very well for the House of Commons to ridicule such plots; but to the Hungarian Socialists, who can look back on twenty-five years of Fascism, it is obvious that the former ruling class will use any means to regain its recently broken hold; last time the Right returned with the help of foreign intervention, and this time the Left will take no risks.

Nor does the direction seem to be towards dictatorship. The discovery of the plot, the arrests, and the flight of Nagy and Varga have changed the balance of power inside the Government Coalition, because the Smallholders Party is disintegrating. But the four-party coalition—Communists, Social Democrats, National Peasants and Smallholders—is genuine in that, though the Communists predominate, the other parties are not overruled: they are often outwitted and out-worked. In legislation the Communists take every initiative, but laws are the product of inter-party discussion. Within limits, the coming elections are likely to be free. A usual guess is that the Communists and Socialists will each gain up to 20–25 per cent. of the total, against 16 per cent. and 18 per cent. last time; the National Peasants may gain up to 10 per cent. as against 6 per cent. last time; while the Smallholders are expected to lose around 20 per cent., reducing their former 57 per cent. majority to 35–40 per cent., by the splitting off of their Right wing and by losses to other coalition parties. Between 10–20 per cent. may be gained by the new Right-wing groups in opposition.

The uncertain factor is still the position of the Smallholders Party. Ten years ago this was a small liberal party representing the gentry and larger peasants. During the war it gained more solid peasant backing; but at the 1945 election it took in all the Right-wing elements, from democratic Conservatives to every shade of Fascism. (There are of course ex-Fascists in all parties, but mainly in the rank and file, whereas in the Smallholders Party they play a larger part.) Now that the Centre leadership, which held together the genuine farmer element and the Right, has gone, the party is breaking up into a weak Left-wing leadership, remaining in the coalition, with a doubtful peasant support, and various break-away Right-wing groups. These Right-wing groups have a lot of support under the surface: Fascism—not noticeably crypto or neo—is still strong in the upper and middle class, but they cannot come out openly as a rallying point against the coalition without incurring the charge of being Fascist. At the moment it is not certain how far the split will go.

The Left, on the other hand, cannot carry the country with it against reaction to the past, because the Communists are identified with Soviet power. Hungary is still an occupied country and, though there are few outward signs of occupation, the question of the German assets assigned to the Soviet is still unsettled—and will not be settled till after the elections. Thus the real dividing line in Hungary does not lie clearly between Right and Left, but between those who are more afraid of the past than of the Communists, and those who would like to restore the past with foreign help. The middle class resents the necessity of choice, wishing it were 1789 or 1848. Particularly the younger generation feels the stress, because the alternative to the past is not yet clear. Hungary is freer than it has ever been, but it is not yet fully a democracy, either of the Eastern or the Western pattern.

Now the alternative is emerging. The Left-wing parties are gaining ground. Communist Party membership has risen from 400,000 in 1945 to 800,000; Socialist Party membership from 600,000 to one million. Opportunism, says the Right. Yet in part at least the increase is due to a real change in opinion. The achievement of the Communists in economic policy is recognised, even by their opponents: the success of the currency stabilisation has falsified Right-wing prophecies. The reconstruction drive under Gerö has restored the transport system to its pre-war volume of traffic. The Three Year Plan, now integrated with the Yugoslav Plan, came into force on August 1st. It is on their success in this field, and on the land reform, that the Left base their hopes of gaining at the elections. On the economic policy Social-Democrats and Communists are united, and for the purpose of the election have agreed not to attack each other. There are serious differences between them—on the candidature of Peyer, for instance—and the Right relishes every sign of friction. But at present there is no likelihood of a breach: by opposing the Communists, the Socialists could certainly gain a big increase in the middle class vote, but only at the cost of opposing a Socialist economic policy and ceasing to be a Marxist party. The bond of 1919 is stronger than Europe's new divisions.

Economic policy has not so far been revolutionary and has hardly touched class issues, apart from the land reform. Only a few big firms have been nationalised. Wages have been pegged at low levels, somewhat offset by Gerö's system of job-time incentive payments. The industrial workers have borne too heavy a share of the cost of reconstruction, as compared with the peasants and the middle class. Wealth seems as ostentatious as ever, the bureaucracy as corrupt. Food supplies are adequate—well above the European average—but dear, and wages cover food only. This situation cannot continue without trouble, and it is the object of the Plan to reverse it, by putting some of the cost of rebuilding on to the higher incomes, through taxation and a capital levy. A 15 per cent. wage increase has accompanied the introduction of the Plan.

But, with the law for the nationalisation of the banks, the really crucial class issue has been reached. This measure, now approved by the Supreme Economic Council and the Cabinet, is vital to the success of the Plan, since the big three, the Credit Bank, the Commercial Bank and the Discount Bank, together control some 60 to 70 per cent. of Hungarian industry and can determine industrial expansion. The banks are the stronghold of the former ruling class, which is still wealthy though it has lost the land. Nationalisation therefore still meets with powerful opposition from the Fifty Families, and it was this opposition which lay behind the plot. According to Nagy's own statement after his flight, his object was to prepare an alternative government to take power when the occupation ended, to prevent the bank nationalisation, and also the realisation of the German assets by the Soviet. From the standpoint of the Left, the object of holding the elections now is to rid the coalition of the elements which opposed the economic policy from within, in order to carry through the nationalisation after the elections.

The political foreground is now occupied by the manoeuvres of the various break-away opposition groups. Sulyok's Freedom Party,

which broke off last year and went into open opposition, has decided to dissolve, because the candidature of Sulyok himself is disqualified under the new electoral law, on the grounds of his former membership of the Gömbös party. Its place has been taken by Pfeiffer's Hungarian Independent Party, with a programme of "citizens'" democracy. Father Balogh, the former Secretary of the Smallholders, has formed the Democratic Peoples Party, is believed to have Government support, and is "not serious." Attempts to form a united Right-wing front with the blessing of the Church have failed: Cardinal Mindszenthy (the Primate) is believed to object to Balogh, and in general the attitude of the Church is less hostile than in 1945. At the moment of writing there is no obvious candidate for the American press to pick out: the custom of identifying the Opposition with the cause of freedom is here reduced to absurdity by the number of starters and by Father Balogh.

In the country, more important things are happening. The story of this rural world in revolution will not make headlines, but it is the one thing worth seeing. The long overdue land reform divided up about half of Hungary's arable land, some six million acres, among 600,000 new owners, mainly the destitute and oppressed estate labourers. In the villages where there was enough land to cut up into farms of adequate size the effect on living standards is already obvious: the new farmers are eating wheat bread instead of maize, drinking coffee with sugar. In others, where the new holdings are small—too small with two bad harvests—the struggle to be independent is hard, but even so there is no desire to return to "the old world." "Now we still work from 4 to 8, but we work for ourselves, and we are not afraid of the gendarme" is here the meaning of democracy.

Politically the villages are wide awake. The new settlers seem to be mainly Communist or National Peasant (the latter shaped the lines of the reform). The old-established farmers, somewhat shaken by the levelling up, are fairly solidly Smallholders. Tractor co-operatives, organised by the new generation of Communists, are struggling to make old estate machinery work. The hangers-on of the old regime, bailiffs, foremen, small officials use the threat of the "Kolhoz" or the atom bomb, and there is still mistrust, which the Left-wing parties, all now very active in the villages, try to remove. By now it is certain that the reform is politically established and that no Budapest intrigue can reverse it. Its economic success must depend on the intensification and investment foreseen in the Three Years Plan. "Extra Hungariam non est vita," said the magnate of the past. Now the strong current of Hungarian life is turning into new channels, and for the first time the landless peasants are beginning to share in it on equal terms.

DOREEN WARRINER

A LONDON DIARY

ONCE again August has exploded two persistent myths about itself. The first is that it is just a wet and cold part of an invariably wet and unsettled British summer. In fact I remember a great deal of fine August weather going back to 1911, when the Wye was so low that as schoolchildren we spent most of the summer running our boat onto rocks and jumping into the river to push it off again. Amongst other fine Augusts there was August 1921 which, as an undergraduate, I spent tramping in Austria and Bavaria and drinking, I recall, nine pints of beer a day to make up for the moisture lost in walking. Then there was the mocking sunshine of 1940 and the heat of black August 1939 which ended with the children arriving hot, with their gas masks, looking round in bewilderment at the cows and asking where they were going to live. The second myth that dies even harder—though I think Fleet Street has learnt its lessons—is that August is to be treated as the "silly season," when the newspaper reader is supposed to want nothing except innocent gossip about murder and rape and drowning accidents on the South Coast. In fact there is no month in which great events so persistently occur. No need to strain memory for August 1914 or August 1931, or for the beginning of the Spanish war in August 1936 or the Japanese war of 1937 or the Czech crisis in August 1938 or the climax of the German crisis in August 1939. These are only the most obvious examples of the Great August Illusion. Taking it by and large in weather and international and domestic politics, 1947 is about an average August.

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The spectacle of Ministers desperately seeking rest and recreation in remote corners of this island and being hauled back for Cabinet crises has been treated by some nit-wits as an easy target for ridicule. In fact no men ever more needed or deserved a holiday and it is a national misfortune that it should be interrupted. There are some black and grey spots in this Cabinet, but the notion that its leaders are incompetent or doctrinaire is as far from the truth as the Churchillian tarradiddle about their dictatorial tendencies. You will hear no such criticisms from the chief Civil Servants who have been working with this Cabinet and who worked before with the other Cabinets. The truth is that if Ministers had not been so overworked and overtired they would have been better able to reach those urgent and terribly difficult decisions that a crisis, itself outside their control, should have compelled them to make. They could each make decisions for their own departments, but failed to agree on the measures necessary to meet this catastrophe—with the result that it caught them and the country unprepared. The one recent mistake that sticks out a mile was the Treasury's fantastic reassurance to Mr. Clayton that sterling could stand up to the process of "convertibility." So sure were the experts on this point that they seem to have convinced the Chancellor and many other authorities, including the editor of the *Economist*, who last week gave a strong hint that he had been persuaded against his better judgment. Those who are not experts assumed as a matter of common sense that Britain would make use of all the escape clauses that Lord Keynes had provided in the Loan Agreement. Apart from this grievous error, which has intensified but not of course created the crisis, the real charge against the Government is that, having made what I think was the initial mistake of taking the loan in the first place, they did not prepare a programme of siege economics which could be put into operation as soon as dollars began obviously to fail.

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Lacking such a programme Mr. Morrison could do no more in his Saturday night broadcast than deliver a well-considered pep-talk. As such it was good; it was delivered with more spirit than the Prime Minister's and it made, I thought, a more individual impact because it did tell each of us a few definite things we ought and ought not to do. Presumably Mr. Morrison went as far as he could in view of Cabinet indecisions and the uncertainties about the negotiations in Washington and Paris. But we ought not to be allowing dollars to prevent decision. We ought to have a plan which manages without dollars. We have to stand "if necessary alone" i.e., without American aid, and we had better know just how tough that will be. What the ordinary Labour supporter needs to-day is a short answer to the question he is asked all day long—what is the Government going to do to meet a £700 million deficit in overseas payments and what do you and I have to do about it over the next twelve months? It cannot of course be anything like a complete, still less an expert answer, but it must be the sort of answer that adds up.

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When the Government gives such an outline plan it will be surprised at the response and at the eagerness of journalists and speakers to explain it to the country. At the moment all the latent enthusiasm is being wasted; enthusiasm cannot survive permanently on the defensive. Such a programme automatically answers the subsidiary questions. Take steel nationalisation for instance. What an unnecessary muddle to a problem that is surely susceptible of a very clear answer. If there is no "over-all" programme then there is a very poor case for nationalising steel at this time. The result would admittedly be a temporary fall in production during the political row and reorganisation, and the Opposition could say, with great effect, that the Government, unable to find a way out of the country's immediate economic mess, was indulging in an irrelevant piece of party legislation. But if the Government has a plan for meeting the crisis which involves, as I think it must, a far more rigorous control of our production and exports, then obviously the nationalisation of steel (which the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation now demands "immediately and in full") takes its place with many other measures as a necessary part of the Socialist, and indeed the only efficient, way of saving Britain.

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If John Strachey finds it necessary to go further than his modest cut of one-seventh in restaurant food, here is a simple plan for him. Tell them that for the next six months they shall have no meat at all; but all the fish they can manage. For the winter, the diner-out shall dine on fish, as well cooked as the restaurant chefs can cook it. That is no hardship; though, if they insist, the caterers might be allowed sausages, since those make hors-d'œuvres palatable and allow one to cook spaghetti bolognese, risotto and other economical dishes. It would be an easy rule to police—almost self-enforcing, indeed, since any meat meal served in a restaurant would be *prima facie* an offence, visible and in public. Moreover it would at last force the people of this island to learn to cook and eat the food that islanders should.

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"If your little girl preached the gospel, what would you do?" Mr. Martz asked the audience at the Albert Hall on Sunday. What Mr. Martz usually does is to advertise the meeting well in advance to ensure a good collection. This time there had been a slip-up, and when little Renée tripped onto the platform, with her doll and two pink flowers in her hair, there were only seven hundred to welcome her. Not that the seven hundred were unappreciative. They stood and clapped their hands while they sang "The Blood of the Lamb" and other favourite revivalist hymns, although they showed a marked lack of interest in Mr. Martz's plea for £200 to cover the hire of the hall and "a few pounds for the hotel bill." Renée is an accomplished show-girl for a seven-year-old. Singing her first song, she saw out of the corner of her eye a photographer crawling towards her from the side of the platform. Instantly she threw up her hands in a motion of ecstasy, and the magnesium flared to make the perfect picture. She is a highly intelligent child with a fluent prattle, which at times reached hysteria point as her father from behind shouted "Hallelujah!" or an elderly grinning clergyman, also on the platform, yelled, "Bless her!" What she said in her twenty-five minutes' sermon was mostly lost through poor acoustics, but at intervals she could be heard demanding a revival for the churches, the preachers, the world, London, daddy and herself. To encourage daddy she had previously informed the meeting, mostly middle-aged women and small children, that she had told him she didn't mind there not being a large audience. She would preach to them just the same. At the end Mr. Martz put his hands round his daughter's bowed head and prayed that God would put some sense into his head, enabling him to avoid future financial flops, to which some members of the audience said amen. All harmless enough, I suppose—that is, for the audience and the parents. But one wonders what Renée will have to say to daddy when she grows up. CRITIC

SCIENCE AND THE CRISIS

THE only way out of our present jam, short of becoming pensioners of the United States in return for military policing duties, is to increase by a factor of 10-20 per cent. the efficiency of British industry and agriculture. This will never be done by relying exclusively on economic factors, or persuading or forcing people to work harder and for longer hours. It needs an actual transformation of British industry, and that transformation has to be put through in a matter of five years at longest. Luckily the present efficiency of British industry is so low, as Working Party reports have revealed, that there is ample room for improvement. The wastes involved are terrific. Four-fifths of the coal that is burnt is wasted, and, from our present knowledge, at least a quarter of that waste could be eliminated. We use materials extravagantly. An ordinary house weighs 140 tons and uses 15 tons of coal in its construction, when it only need weigh one-tenth of that amount. Our transport and distribution systems have never been designed for bringing goods to where they are wanted with the minimum wastage of time or fuel. Worst of all, we waste to a large extent the most precious of our resources, trained man-power itself. The Government, the largest user of scientific and technical man-power, employs some 65 per cent. of it for military purposes, and in industry, which employs most of the remainder, a large proportion of scientists are occupied on competitive and largely secret work.

To end these wastes we need something much more than reliance on the traditional qualities of English workmanship and the general goodwill and purpose of the nation. Nor can we rely on the best engineering practice. Technical development based on trial and error needs time, and the only way to shorten it is by using science in the way it was used in the war.

The immediate situation is so serious that it can only be handled by combined and directed effort. We need a scientific and technical General Staff closely integrated with the economic and planning staff. The reason for this is that there are thousands of problems, each of which is important and each of which can be solved, given time and men. But these are just what we have not got, so the first job is to determine which problems are worth tackling and which are not. It is a straight priority question which cannot be left to chance, and can only be solved by people who are in the picture with regard both to the general economic situation of the country and also the scientific and technical possibilities. That General Staff, of which we have the nucleus in the Advisory Planning Board and Advisory Committee on Scientific Policy, could, working together, provide the directives. To carry out the work we should have to mobilise the whole scientific man-power of the country to almost the same degree as we did in the war, reserving only the essential sectors of teaching and fundamental research without which we would be sacrificing the future to the present. This means transferring a considerable sector of men and laboratories engaged on military research to civil purposes, and taking steps to pool scientific research in industries and to concentrate it on the key industries.

With such a staff and such a research force it would be possible to tackle our problems as military problems were tackled, according to a definite plan, not trying to do everything at once but breaking up the problem into phases. In the first phase it would be a matter of finding out how to economise without employing new capital, by switching materials and services to where they were most needed. This would need physical research, as, for example, in finding out how to use reinforced concrete instead of timber, or how to turn industrial waste products into building materials. But much more would it require operational research, which could be applied to such problems as the best utilisation of railways.

In the later phases we could bring in the first big industrial changes, such as more effective fuel utilisation, the use of industrial oxygen, which would cut capital costs and time in the metal industries; and ultimately the use of atomic power.

A scheme of this kind is a necessity of survival. What is important now is that this should be understood and accepted by the men who will have to work it, and that no consideration of tradition or vested interest should stand in its way. It is to be hoped that at the British Association Conference the scientists will show themselves alive to their new responsibilities implied in their motto of turning swords into ploughshares. At the forthcoming T.U.C. Congress the Association of Scientific Workers is putting forward a resolution urging the use of science in production and the need for it to be represented on the highest planning levels. The acceptance of that resolution would mark the end of the long period of well-justified suspicion of the working class toward science, and the cementing of a union on which the future of the country depends.

J. D. BERNAL

THE BRITISH MOTOR INDUSTRY

THE British motor industry has never yet produced at a reasonable price a really good car between the "Baby Austin" and the Rolls-Royce types. It is true that some very good "special" or "Sports" cars were made before the war at high cost, but even these were rarely as good as similar types made in France, Italy and Germany. As for mass-produced cars, owing to lack of statistics there is no reliable yardstick by which the efficiency of the British industry can be judged. Before the war it was calculated that American manufacturers produced ten times the number of cars from double the number of man-hours. This may have been an exaggeration, but there seems little doubt that American mass production is at least three times as efficient as ours in terms of cars per man-hour. Significantly, too, it is impossible to gauge efficiency as between different British factories. Thus, of the products of our largest factories, which one would assume to be the most efficient in quantity production, a certain 12 h.p. car with independent front suspension is priced at less than the 9 h.p. car, with old-fashioned springing, made by another concern. The cost per ton compared with American cars is a better guide. The cheap American six-seater with a 90 b.h.p. engine weighs about 28½ cwt. and costs about £250. One of our latest sports cars, a tight-fitting four-seater, whose small, high efficiency engine develops the same power, costs over £750. Any British six-seater weighs at least half as much again, with, usually a less powerful engine, and costs anything from 50 to 200 per cent. more. The fact is that, apart from deficiencies in design and standardisation, no British factory has yet achieved anything like mass-production.

These facts are cited not in disparagement of the British industry but as a necessary background for any assessment of its present and future capabilities in the export trade. Between the wars the industry developed in a protected home-market with a system of taxation which encouraged the design and production of numerous models of low power. The result was and still is "individualism gone mad." The Chairman of Lucas's recently observed that his firm is required to make 68 different models of distributor, 60 direction indicators, 133 headlamps, 98 screenwipers and 45 different starters for 58 different model cars. Since the Labour Government set up its Working Party the number of different models has been reduced and some standardisation in accessories has been or will be adopted. Nevertheless, there are still about 30 separate firms making between them about 100 different models.

The leaders of the industry have shown a keen awareness of the nation's need to expand exports. The industry has done well in this respect; but what will happen when the sellers' market ends is a big question.

Obviously, any reduction of car exports must at once be followed by a reduction in the supplies of steel and other raw materials allowed to the industry, causing unemployment of man-power, plant and machines. For, in the critical period ahead, we could not afford to allow more new cars to be consumed at home. But can anything like the present volume of car exports—70,000 in 1946 with a target of about 150,000 in 1947—be maintained? The answer is probably "No." Country after country is being compelled to restrict imports of cars, and British cars will have to meet increasing American and other competition.

Is there any possibility that the British industry can quickly be put into a position to do so? Here, as elsewhere, the long-term policy is the enemy of the short. It would take two years, possibly four, to reorganise and re-equip the industry to produce cars able to compete with American models. Indeed, many experts say this could never be done, since the size of our home market for cars could never be expanded—at least never in the critical period—sufficiently to absorb the overhead costs of the numbers required for export. Assuming, however, that this consideration may be disregarded, the problem is one of production—that is, of producing a car of good carrying capacity and performance, of modern and attractive appearance, with full equipment to sell at about £250. This could be achieved only if the industry and the Government agreed to accept a reduction in the present output which the necessary re-equipment would entail, and only if the industry agreed to, or the Government imposed, the necessary rationalisation.

It may be assumed that various limiting factors such as shortage of steel will at least for the next five years prevent the British industry from exceeding a production figure of 400,000 cars—that is much less than half the output of one of the biggest American firms. But, if the principal British factories combined, they might be able to mass-produce 300,000 cars a year, leaving the rest for the high-quality type which will still be useful for export. Concentration on from four to six basic models—by runs of at least 50,000 of each per annum—might produce cars as cheaply as the Americans (or even cheaper, since wages here are lower), provided there is complete standardisation throughout of all accessories, and as far as possible of all components and parts. No attempt should be made to copy the American big car. What will be demanded abroad as much as at home, and even to a limited but highly important degree in the United States is (*a*) a very small car at a really low price, and (*b*) a medium-sized vehicle of great durability and highly efficient performance.

But the matter does not end there. For even if the right models at the right prices could be produced by these means, they would have little chance of competing with Americans in buyers' markets abroad unless supported by a comparable sales and service organisation. American methods of service and maintenance—immediate replacement of defective parts including change of engine within a few hours—could only be provided with the required degree of standardisation and by an organisation such as a vast combine could set up.

If this can be done, why should it not be done? The reply is twofold. In the first place, if it were to be done in time, the process should have been started before now; we should have followed the example of France, where the Government has directed seven factories to concentrate on seven models, one each, aiming at a very considerable export of French cars in 1950. In the second place, even if all this were achieved in the short time left, it might prove to be a costly failure. If there is a slump in America or (even if there is not) when the sellers' market becomes a buyers', the American industry will increase its exports.

This it will be able to do by price-cutting. Even if a slump reduced American home consumption —and thus production—from about 6 to about 2 million cars per annum, the cars sold in the United States would pay all the overheads on an export of 200,000. Indeed, one of the big American firms is said to proceed on the basis that one car in ten is "free," i.e., produced without cost. Before the war the total volume of international trade in cars was about 350,000 per year, and it is unlikely to be as much during the next five years. Thus we could not hope to sell more than 100,000. In the face also of French competition, and, it may be, Italian as well, we might not reach more than half that figure. If there were a "slump," it might be much less. Even if we maintained 100,000 per annum, this would leave us with over 200,000 for home consumption —far more than we could afford to take.

The conclusion is that, not only should the car industry be rationalised but that it should be drastically reduced, and its present output cut by half. It should be rationalised by the merger of all the large factories into one combine and the elimination of many small concerns. The fullest degree of standardisation throughout should be developed. The combine should produce not more than 150,000 cars a year, in two, or at most three, models. Outside the combine there should be not more than about ten factories, each making cars of the high quality type in quantities not exceeding an aggregate of 25,000. By these means we might hope to maintain a steady export of 80,000 cars a year—which was about our pre-war figure—bringing in, say, £15,000,000. Instead of 175,000 cars, an equivalent quantity of tractors, commercial vehicles, refrigerators or other articles could be made. The temporary unemployment involved in the re-tooling would be better than the much longer and greater unemployment which will result if present policy—or rather lack of it—goes on.

At this time of so-called crisis what is the policy of the Government? So far it has refused to publish the recommendations of its own Working Party, the Motor Industry Advisory Council, established in March 1946, consisting mostly of the leaders of the industry. Government policy from the outset has been to encourage the export of as many cars as the industry could produce, after allowing a sufficient number for replacement at home. At first the proportion was fifty-fifty, and recently it has been agreed with the industry that 75 per cent. shall be exported. Supply of steel to the industry has been controlled below demand, and there is little doubt that more could be used, and would be allotted by the Government, if the total production of steel were increased. The Government policy, therefore, seems simply to be giving the industry every encouragement to make and export as many cars as possible, without regard to long-term prospects or to type of currency—hard or soft—which the exports earn. No effort has been made to compel the industry to rationalise itself or even to concentrate on the production of fewer models. Nor has any consideration been given to the need for world recovery. Thus the Nuffield Organisation's plans for large-scale production of a tractor have recently been abandoned in the face of a world-wide need for agricultural machinery—apparently with the approval of the Government.

CHRISTOPHER SHAWCROSS

IN THE RUSSIAN ZONE

IT is only in people's minds that the Iron Curtain seems formidable. As a physical obstacle I found it easy enough to pierce. For six days I motored through Brandenburg and Saxony; and though I was conducted by a Russian officer, I had ample opportunity for unchaperoned talks. Moreover, I made two further day-trips into the Zone, using the car of a German friend, and without any supervision at all.

Many "Westerners" (Allies and Germans alike) seemed to view my little trip to the Eastern Zone very much like an expedition into some dangerous jungle; and had I been torn limb from limb or deported to Siberia—I have yet to learn of any Russian deportation alleged to be to a less remote and shivery place—I certainly could not have complained about lack of fair warning. It is no less significant that many "Easterners"—and by no means only Russians and officials of the Socialist Unity Party (S.E.D.)—hold equally distorted, or at least vastly exaggerated, views of the Western Zone, such as that the Ruhr is a hotbed of Fascism.

The Eastern Zone is a little better off for food, and while I heard much grumbling about the prolonged potato shortage, no one (out of a score of persons asked) could complain about failure to meet the other food rations. As to fuel, very little provision seems to have been made, and I came across just as much dread of the coming winter as in the West—a fear which is only too grimly justified, though it seemed strangely inappropriate when expressed in a sweltering heat-wave by deeply sun-tanned people.

Standards of denazification are stricter than in the West. In some districts up to 90 per cent. of the school-teachers have been axed, and university professors, unless their political past is quite beyond reproach, are not allowed to lecture; but they may do research work, and they can accept private assignments from publishers. Any less highly qualified person—let alone a would-be student—is gravely handicapped by the mere accident of a bourgeois background or by having been an officer; this would condemn the most blameless person to menial work, unless he could plead some anti-Fascist activity or membership of the S.E.D. Such routine discrimination has inevitably caused a vicious circle by embittering blameless people who were quite willing to co-operate, but whose very victimisation has made them do objectionable things, such as nipping across the Zone-border and exaggerating their tale of woe to very willing listeners.

On the other hand, the very substantial influx of eager young proletarians (specially picked and efficiently "crammed") to the universities is wholesome and commendable. It invigorates academic life, which in the Eastern Zone is not as unreasonably overcrowded as in the West. The 9,803 students admitted to the nine universities in the Soviet Zone certainly bear a much healthier relation to what can be absorbed in the professions than the 33,736 in the U.S. Zone's fourteen universities, or the 24,597 in the British Zone (twelve universities), or the 9,371 in the French Zone's three universities.

One most remarkable effort of the Zone is the radical educational reform embodied in the *Einheitsschule*, which is now the law of the land and gives an equal educational chance to everybody, from kindergarten to university. Even the basic *Einheitsschule* offers a much higher standard than any previous elementary school. There is a choice of up to three modern languages, and, of course, Latin for those who make the (pretty stiff) grade of transition to secondary schooling. The rest have vocational training from 15 to 18, with twelve additional hours per week of ordinary schooling, and with a repeated opportunity of transition to a university education.

The scheme has been criticised as too ambitious to stand the practical test. But I think it will; and the much-maligned *Junglehrer* (many of whom have come to the teaching profession from other jobs) seem to be shaping remarkably well, considering that their initial, quick training was admittedly inadequate. They keep on learning and they can draw on expert advice for specific problems. Moreover, as soon as the first fully qualified post-war crop of teachers is available, the best of the *Junglehrer* will be relieved for at least another two terms of study, rewarding them for having come forward when teachers were most desperately needed.

Religious teaching is entirely a matter for the churches. But the new law provides that, while no child can be forced to attend scripture class, none may be deprived of it if the parents desire it. It seems remarkable that in a rural district never known to be particularly religious I found 95 per cent. of the children receiving religious tuition at their parents' request. If this is a political demonstration, it is certainly no less significant than an incident during a pedagogic congress I attended at Dresden. One humble schoolmaster got up and said that, with all legitimate pride in the achievement of the *Einheitsschule*, one must not overlook the fact that, out of 60,000 Leipzig schoolchildren, 7,000 were gravely undernourished and 27,000 in almost equally bad shape. When this drew applause from the speaker's fellow-delegates on the floor, someone on the platform promptly described the speech as well as the applause most "uncalled for." The chairman said that it was no use harping on troubles they were all well aware of; better remember that Yugoslav children had starved too; and whose fault was it anyway but the Fascist warmongers'? However, it will take a lot to make Germans think of Yugoslav children before their own!

I spent a day in the *Oderbruch*, a district 50 miles east of Berlin, which saw much fighting in the final stage of the war, and was again devastated in the particularly severe spring-floods this year. The little village I went to (Gorgas) had been worst hit and completely under water three or four months earlier. But I found much of it rebuilt and the fields in full bloom. Incidentally, it should be called a settlement rather than a village; for here is a typical example of the land reform in the Eastern Zone. Up to 1945 this was one large estate, and now some 160 *Neusiedler* are settled there with their families, each on a few acres of his own soil. I talked to quite a few of them (including their mayor) and I found some to be newcomers to farming; others were refugees from East Prussia or Silesia. They have all been hard hit by weather, but they were given new agricultural implements for the local Co-op., and also some horses and cattle and 2,500 chicks to start a little poultry-farming. Even so, their difficulties are still considerable, but they can make a living and meet their quota of deliveries to town, and in a year or two they hope to make a much better living. They speak quite openly about their principal grievance—shortage of agricultural machinery, which they share on a co-operative basis.

As the S.E.D. is very powerful in the countryside and is the main sponsor of the land reform, I wished to check my own favourable (but non-expert) impressions, so I went to listen to whatever constructive criticism the agricultural experts of the Opposition (Christian Democrats and Liberals) had to offer. Their main point is that, in view of the inequality of soil, a schematic division of a large estate into so many units of equal size can never be fair; nor can the small unit be farmed as rationally as the large one, even with the help of Co-op. machinery and chemicals. Thus, a far more sensible solution than a mere division would have been a *kolkhoz* on Russian lines, maintaining the efficiency and rational economy of a large estate, and yet serving the socially desirable object of accommodating a large number of small settlers rather than one wealthy squire. Finally, these critics assert that the only reason why so sensible a course was not adopted is the S.E.D.'s reluctance to give the appearance of imitating Soviet methods.

In summing up these impressions of the Eastern Zone, the decisive point, to my mind, is the fact that, in spite of all drawbacks and unpleasantly coercive aspects (some no doubt unavoidable), there is a definite constructive policy. Significantly, on the Leipzig-Berlin road I saw more actual building in progress than one would normally encounter along 1,000 miles of Western roads. I was also impressed by a (completely unpolitical) friend who, when we met in Berlin last year, was desperately unhappy about having to live in the Eastern Zone. But meanwhile, having had an opportunity of seeing all the other three Zones, my friend no longer wishes to move, convinced that, for the time being, life has more purpose in the Eastern Zone.

HEINRICH FRAENKEL

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to W. H. Cozens.
Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

G.F.—We have no authority to decide whether whale steaks should be reckoned proper Friday fare. Ask your bishop.—*The Church Times.*

Albert Edward Kemp and Leslie Baker, both Servicemen, of Wellsted Street, Hull, who were sent to prison at Hull for breaking a shop window, are to appeal. The window they smashed with a brick did not belong to a Jew, as they had thought.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Casein Plastics had a brief vogue as buried inserts, but the material slowly metabolised (and the patient thereafter smelt strongly of cheese).—Essays on Rheology (pub. Pitman and Sons, Ltd.)

The *West Surrey Committee* record the instance of a man who wished to take divorce proceedings, but later withdrew the application "in case his wife got to hear about it."—Annual Report, 1947, of the Law Society.

Perhaps one of the most insistent inquiries from overseas has been on where the Royal couple will live after their marriage. The fact that the Princess and her husband will probably have to share Buckingham Palace with their parents has done more than any amount of propaganda to convince the rest of the world that there is a housing shortage in Britain.—*The Weekly Telegraph.*

AUTHORSHOLME

ARRIVED ten p.m., and have a wizard room, quite large. Can hardly believe my luck—almost everyone else here is fearfully famous. Matron said she hoped I'd not mind being the youngest authoress in the place. Mind! Why, it's like a dream. Though I got here late, I've already caught sight of Bernard Shaw, Walter de la Mare and Godfrey Winn. It's the most wonderful house I've ever seen, simply covered with pinnacles and turrets, must be awfully old, and a huge park. I'm sure the Czech writers' castle isn't half so fine.

Into the garden before breakfast, I've never seen such flowers. I was looking at the knights and monks carved round the porch when such a nice man came and talked to me. "I'm glad you admire it," he said. "The largest private house ever built in England. Middle Waterhouse, his best period. Represents half a million pounds profits on custard powder that had no eggs in it." He seems to know an awful lot about architecture, but he looks like a cavalry officer. I wonder if he's Ian Hay. I sat at breakfast between Beachcomber and a man called Eliot. They didn't seem very talkative. Then I was sent for by Norman Poggs, who runs Authorsholme; he used to be head of one of the Butlin holiday-camps, and is ever so jolly. My father suggested him for the job. We are *absolutely* free, he explained, to do exactly what we like. We have to be punctual for meals, of course, or it wouldn't be fair on the waitresses. And we're expected to be in by ten at night, or it wouldn't be fair on the porter. But one can always go away for the night, once a month, if one gets a permit and can prove where one will be staying. And then on Sunday mornings there's always an informal talk in the library, which everyone goes to, though it's not exactly compulsory. And the same with the debate each Thursday evening. How exciting it all sounds.

Matron introduced me to Edward Sackville West who, she says, is a special favourite of hers. He seems a little sad. He told me that in the next room to his the wireless was on the whole day (every room here has its wireless). I can't see why he should object to this, I always thought he loved the wireless. Of course, the walls here aren't very thick, I could hear the typewriter all morning in the next room to mine, which is Rose Macaulay's. And on the other side Rosamond Lehmann was dictating. She has such a beautiful clear voice. How I long to meet Noel Coward!

I put my name down, on Matron's advice, for the Saturday hike, a good way of getting to know people, she said. But no one else turned up except Joad, and when he saw me, he said he thought he'd go for a ride instead, and I was just summoning up my courage to argue with him about women. I suppose it's natural for famous authors to be *shy*.

The big noise here, of course, is the Head Stationer, the "H.S." as he's called. Now that the Stationery Office has taken over all the publishing in the country, he likes to keep an eye on the authors, and he has a flat here, which he usually comes to at the week-end. He did such wonders, first at Littlewood's, and then raising the production of bricklayers, that the Government put him on to authors. He gave the Library Talk this morning, and was so inspiring. The Library simply glows with stained glass, it used to be the private chapel; and before the talk Lord Driberg read so reverently a passage from *A Modern Utopia*. Then the H.S. mounted the pulpit. We weren't pulling our weight, he said. The Government had put this beautiful mansion at our disposal, given us privileges that not even the shop-assistants enjoyed, and yet the latest statistics showed that production was still falling. If we didn't pull our socks up, our places would be taken by younger people, who would know how to appreciate what was done for them. (And here he gave me such a friendly, meaningful look.) He was seriously considering the reorganisation of the State Home for the Incorporated Trade Union of Authors (that's the official name of Authorsholme, though it's usually known by its initials). He had made every effort to improve our morale, and to make us happy. No fewer than thirteen Cabinet Ministers had already sacrificed their valuable time to come and give up pep-talks. And with what results? Novels had fallen by 57 per cent, biographies by 86, and poetry by 94. Criticism, on the other hand, had risen by 241 per cent and we had got too much of that already! The quality wasn't right either. Many of us still wrote to please ourselves, not to give the public what was good for it. What should we say of coal-miners or transport-workers if they ran trains and motor-buses to amuse themselves and not to serve the community? He hoped we did not think ourselves more important than Transport-Workers! He feared some of us did, and he felt bound to be frank. Mr. Dylan Thomas's poems, Mr. Ayer's books on philosophy, Miss Compton-Burnett's novels, for instance—why, he himself couldn't make head or tail of them. How then did they expect to be read by agricultural labourers or boiler-makers? Busy as he was, he came down here every week-end, and we knew he was at our disposal to give us advice about our work. But if we did ask him to see us, it was to make some frivolous complaint. Many of us, he feared *most*, were little better than spivs. Let us think seriously, very seriously, about the future, *our* future. Or the Government would take stern measures. And now would Mr. Sidney Horler please go to the lectern and read Book 2 of Hiawatha which had an energetic, usefully employed hero, a constructive outlook, and an unaffected style.

I went straight to my room, feeling so ashamed, and wrote for all I was worth. At luncheon when I said to Peter Quennell how wonderful the H.S. had been, he just gave me a look, and went on talking to Ethel Mannin. Desmond MacCarthy wandered in too late to get anything to eat, *again*. He's getting to look rather thin. Still no sign of Noel.

At first I thought the others were standoffish because I'm so much younger and have published only one book (though it *was* the Midlands Book of the Week). But I'm beginning to suspect that writers don't much like each other! This afternoon I saw C. S. Lewis, Harold Nicolson and E. M. Forster all walking off alone in different directions. Evelyn Waugh seems to spend most of his time several miles away at Peersholme. (This is reserved for "Earls and over," so we have Lord Berners and Lord Joad here.) I suppose he goes there to see Bertrand Russell. The wives here get on better with each other than the writers do; and the authoresses' husbands are awfully matey. It's all very mysterious, I should have thought writers would love to be together. When I passed a remark about this to Orwell, "Blimey" was all he said.

I ran into Priestley near the herbaceous border this afternoon and asked him if he didn't think it lovely. He didn't. Of course, a lot of the writers here used to have cottages of their own, and I see it was sad for them in some ways to have to leave them. But then none of them had houses with a swimming-pool and a "pool" of typists and a gym, as we have. Somerset Maugham refused to leave his villa on the Riviera, the Sitwells and Sir Max Beerbohm insist on staying in Italy, though this means their books can't appear here. Norman Poggs had to speak very seriously yesterday to Cyril Connolly, who was overheard saying he would rather be in his grave, however unquiet.

Who is the tall, handsome man on the top floor who looks so ashamed of himself? I keep catching him on the stairs carrying a suit-case. Then he's always stopped at the front door, and sent back. News of Noel at last. He's not at Authorsholme, or at Playersleigh either. He pulled strings and got transferred to the Chaplain's Department of the Admiralty.

All of a sudden the atmosphere has got much more friendly. What the H.S. said must have sunk in. The garden is dotted with little groups busily chatting away. Charles Morgan and Cyril Connolly have become inseparable, even Pritchett and Mortimer have made up their silly quarrel. (It started with an argument about one of them taking more than his share of butter! Until I came here, I never knew that writers were so *greedy*.) They are known as the Pug and the Poodle, because they follow each other round like two quarrelling and inseparable dogs, and give themselves such airs you'ld think the New Statesman still existed. But now they are as thick as thieves. Altogether there is quite a new spirit. Peter Quennell was charming to me at dinner this evening, said what nice hair I have.

It's Stephen Spender who keeps trying to slip out without a pass. The life here seems to have got on his nerves, poor thing. Agatha Christie tells me that since Authorsholme was started there have been over sixty attempts to escape (what a horrid way of putting it!), Miss G. B. Stern tried tunnelling, but George Miller is the only one who wasn't brought back. Matron keeps our identity-cards in a safe, so of course one can't even buy a railway ticket.

The ex-editor of that highbrow old *New Writing* asked me to come into the park and fly his kite with him. I was awfully bucked, he's got the most piercingly blue eyes I was ever looked at with. Graham Greene, who usually won't speak to anyone except Henry Green and F. L. Green, came loping up to join us. I was quite right. They've decided to turn over a new leaf—*all* of them. Graham Greene said: "Repentance, mass-repentance, is the only way out. And we're all going to burn everything we've written here. It's all cigarette-ends and used ice-cream-cartons. It can become beautiful only when it flames." John agreed (he asked me to call him John). And he's so hypnotic, I agreed too, though I don't see what's wrong with *my* stuff.

The burning was fixed for after dinner, but it turned out that nobody except me had written anything! So it had to be *symbolic*. The H.S. opened the bonfire by putting on it some French books that Matron had found under the planks in Pryce-Jones's bedroom. Then the most awful thing happened. All the authors seemed to go mad, only it was really a plot. (So that is what they were getting together about!). They came rushing out with the chairs and tables and desks and curtains and pushed them into the flames. Betjeman and Koestler fetched tins of petrol from the garage, and all of a sudden the house caught fire! No one tried to check it, but William Sansom led a rescue-party and got Stonier out just in time with a ladder. (He had hidden in the tank-room so as not to be caught translating.) I've never seen anyone so angry as the H.S. He says that last night's work will cost him his job. And now lorries have arrived to take us all off to work "at something useful." I suppose it will be textiles for the authoresses and coal-mining for the younger men. (Philip Toynbee says he hopes so—at least he'd then have a cottage to himself, and be able to get on with his novel.) The older ones, it is rumoured, will be set to wash up in canteens. But Matron has promised to take me with her to her new job. Even if there hadn't been the fire, she was leaving. She has been promoted to Broadmoor.

R. V. S.

The Arts and Entertainment

CURRENT MUSIC

THE Edinburgh Festival is a magnificent challenge to our joyless and cheeseparing times; so much interest and variety has been packed into three short weeks that the choice of dates becomes a problem for the intending visitor. Still, a choice has to be made; and mine having fallen upon the early days of September, I hope readers will have the indulgence to wait another week or two for an account of these northern festivities. But there is one feature to which I wish to draw attention at once, namely, the revival of Verdi's *Macbeth* by the Glyndebourne Opera Company. The 1938 performances of this work at Glyndebourne—and still more those of the following year, with Margherita Grandi as Lady Macbeth—not only revealed it as a fiery and unaccountably neglected masterpiece, but were vocally, orchestrally, and above all scenically and dramatically, by long odds the most thrilling performances of an Italian opera which I have ever witnessed. At Edinburgh the two principal singers are the same as at Glyndebourne in 1939; and though I write this before Wednesday's broadcast, I feel fairly confident in imploring all who care for the lyrical drama in general, and for Verdi in particular, to hear *Macbeth* if they possibly can. It will be broadcast again on September 8th.

Music at the moment is mostly an affair of the loudspeaker. Now that everything of interest is relaid from the Proms, I confess that, quite apart from the glorious weather, I prefer to listen to them at home: one hears the music so much more clearly! How glad I am, for example, that I heard Solomon play the *Emperor Concerto* over the air and not across the unequally resonant spaces of the Albert Hall. It was a masterly performance: solid, deeply studied, impeccably clean; there is no more satisfying classical pianist now before the public. What particularly pleases me about his Beethoven is that he always keeps the tone round, sonorous and beautiful. The world is full of pianists who believe themselves to be rendering the energy and impetuosity of Beethoven's thought by a fa-ouche and percussive style of playing; a profound mistake.

Of last week's two relays from the Salzburg Festival, that of *Arabella* was notable for the beautiful singing of Maria Reining and Lisa della Casa as the heroine and her disguised-as-a-boy sister; in fact, the performance as a whole was thoroughly enjoyable, provided one could put up with the rather feeble Hofmannsthal libretto and the endless *extase* of Strauss's later operatic style. After an hour or so the lack of muscle in the music becomes exasperating, and the lack of melodic material too—what pale ghosts of waltzes—and yet the thing is kept going somehow by sheer fluency and cleverness, and, in particular, by the composer's passionate love and understanding of the human voice, especially the soprano voice. It was in this respect, above all, that Gottfried Einem's operatic version of *Dantons Tod* (the novelty of the Festival) broke down. It was in any case an ambitious choice for a young composer: the inevitably drastic cutting of the text allowed little of Büchner's sublety and poetry to come through, and reduced some of his principal characters to cardboard figures. But the composer hardly rose even to the lyrical moments which he had left himself, such as Lucile Desmoulins's soliloquy at the end of the first act and the prison scene between Danton and Camille Desmoulins in the second. The orchestra whipped itself up into the familiar convulsive rhythms of our day; some of the choral writing sounded effective enough in the Mussorgskian style, and may well have been extremely striking in the opera house itself; but an opera simply cannot be built on solo vocal parts so lifeless that they sometimes consist of a single note repeated again and again and again. It's time young composers realised that opera has almost ceased to be a living art precisely because of their failure to discover a lyrically expansive kind of writing, a contemporary style of melody and *arioso* which, without lapsing into *pastiche*, shall be as grateful for singers (and therefore as popular with audiences) as Mozart or Verdi or Smetana, or the lyrical passages of Wagner and Strauss. *Pelléas* and *Wozzeck* are two of the most wonderful creations of modern musical sensibility; but consider purely as examples of operatic techniques, they are not pointers towards the future, but enormously interesting dead ends.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RADIO NOTES

To take farewell of an audience wholly unknown to one has an impersonal grace. To say that I regret relinquishing this column would be insincere: what I do regret is feeling the need to do so. For radio is not—as books, theatres, and even films are—an inexhaustible subject. Fascinating as a medium, in technique broadcasting is really very simple; so that in quite a short time radio criticism reduces itself, as often as not to criticism of the material broadcast. What is known as the "radio sense" is all-important to the critic, but even this cannot keep permanently in check quite another sense: that he has said his say and could more usefully turn to other fields of inquiry or invention. Those who have followed (patiently or otherwise) what I have written in the past three years about the art of broadcasting will now, I feel sure, welcome an entirely new view. Besides, radio criticism, if pursued seriously, takes up a lot more time than a writer who is only secondarily a journalist can for long afford. Of all the excuses I can muster for deserting my post, that one is perhaps finally the most cogent.

The period in which I have been privileged to fill this column has been a particularly interesting one in the history of broadcasting. The end of a long war and the consequent reorientation of programme material; the evolution of single-studio technique in the performance of plays; finally—and most important of all—the introduction to the Third Programme: "Here's richness!" And looking back over Radio Notes during those years I notice indeed some of the highest lights ever produced by the B.B.C. Of these the majority seem to be various kinds of dramatised programme—a natural enough conclusion, since music and talks, however admirably chosen, performed and transmitted, are not intrinsic radio. Among the plays I should unhesitatingly place Louis MacNeice's *The Dark Tower* and the Jones-Cleverdon *In Parenthesis* at the top of any list drawn up to show the compass of artistic expression attainable by the microphone. Some way below these, but of peculiar excellence, I recall Laurie Lee's *The Voyage of Magellan* and Henry Reed's version of *Moby Dick*, as examples of that kind of poetic drama which ought to be encouraged. Of the adapted stage plays *The Silver Cord*, *The Wild Duck* and *John Gabriel Borkman*, *No War in Troy*, *Huis Clos*, *The Tunnel*, *Suspect*, and *L'Aiglon*, all succeeded in triumphing over the limitations of the medium, and in some cases stepped up the voltage of the original text by some happy inspiration of technique or of acting.

Of the Features I suppose *The Harbour Called Mulberry* must remain in most people's minds as altogether the best attempt to formalise the ardours and endurances of wartime Britain. If it cannot be called the *In Parenthesis* of the Second German War, it at least recaptured the fantastic atmosphere in which that war was prosecuted. *The Harbour* was an event of a special kind; perhaps even more startling, because less unusual in kind, the reconstruction of *The Wallace Case* remains with me as one of the least tedious of long broadcasts (why has this admirable programme never been repeated?) It is notoriously difficult to combine instruction and entertainment without enfeebling the former; but Nesta Pain's psychological and scientific features,

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TANDEMS FOR TIENTSIN

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and Rayner Heppenstall's *Imaginary Conversations*, have achieved the feat with increasing agility. Discussion series like *Family Relationships* and *To Start You Talking* will doubtless settle down, in one form or another as hardy annuals. They are the daily bread of broadcasting but need rather more care in the baking than they have hitherto received.

Humour, I seem to feel, has been in rather short supply. Indeed, apart from *Itma*, I can name only Stephen Potter's *How* programmes, Peter Watt's *Salute to John Bull*, Louis MacNeice's Aristophanean extravaganza, *The Enemy of Cant*, and one or two inimitable talks by John Betjeman, which reached anything like vertiginous heights of fun. Humour, as opposed to facetiousness, seems almost as hard to capture as beauty—of which, being a form of poetry, it in fact partakes.

In the realm of spoken verse I prefer to recall some outstanding performers, such as Cecil Trouncer and Carleton Hobbs, Cecil Day Lewis and Dylan Thomas, Cathleen Nesbitt and Gladys Young. Unless I am greatly mistaken, it has been above all virtuoso performances of these and other distinguished speakers which have kept us alive to the music of poetry, from Chaucer and Langland (classic programmes, these) to Dylan Thomas and Edith Sitwell.

In the last analysis, however, music takes, and must always take, the lion's share of broadcasting. And here alone it is perhaps unnecessary to be explicit: the benefits showered upon us by Music Department (especially in the last year) have been so numerous and so varied as to defeat even a retentive memory. It is for these that the vast majority of listeners owe their greatest debt of gratitude to the B.B.C. Broadcast music—unlike other sorts of radio—is indeed an inexhaustible subject, and I have had to resist the temptation to devote this column too often and too exclusively to it. It will be for my successor to pay my debt to those parts of broadcasting which—chiefly from diffidence—I have felt obliged to neglect.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

The Saki programme was produced by Eric Gillett and not by Gerald Bullett as stated in last week's notes.

THE MOVIES

"Captain Boycott," at the Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion.
"Master of Bankdam," at the Leicester Square.

Two English films, one live, the other—well, if not dead, recumbent.

Messrs. Gilliat and Launder have always had that spark of vitality which excuses faults; in this case, Launder alone directs. He begins with a good subject. Captain Boycott, like Mr. Hansom, has given us a word, the origin of which we have probably forgotten or never known. I cannot say how far his story as related here is true, but it's a good story. The Captain, then, was a land-agent in County Mayo in the Eighties, and when he threatened his farmers with higher rents or eviction they resisted by withdrawing their labour. He recruits volunteers from the north, writes to *The Times* about it, secures military protection. After some threatening adventures the boycotters win. The Captain retires, defeated, but sticking—we may be sure—to his principles of the barrack-square, which he will apply next perhaps to lodgings in Paddington.

Captain Boycott himself, a comically stupid but not unimposing figure, is played with admirable solidity by Mr. Cecil Parker: from the first moment when he appears drilling his farm-hands and dispensing fines for so many minutes late, we catch both the solidity and the lurking fun. He is only one character among many: the hotheaded schoolmaster (Noel Purcell) who afterwards leads a lynching party, the priest (Alastair Sim), the Captain's bailiff (Mervyn Johns), two lovers on opposite sides in the struggle (Stewart Granger and Kathleen Ryan), and Parnell himself (Robert Donat) who harangues nobly for a few minutes on the policy of boycott and not bloodshed. A feeling for the diversity of human beings, a brilliant pictorial sense, and an irrepressibly bobbing humour keep the whole story tense and active. What a touching moment, for example, it is when to the cheerful smartness of drum and fife the English soldiery come marching down the winding hill road into the village, which has become suddenly deserted, with locked doors and only a donkey and hens in view. The landscapes and interiors, without ever swamping the people, are beautiful throughout. I don't wish to exaggerate the claims of *Captain Boycott*, but it is an unusually well-made and enjoyable film.

Master of Bankdam, on the other hand, is one of those well-meant, exhausting melodramas of industry in which the good members of the family tussle with the bad, and one generation succeeds another, and we all go home thanking heaven we haven't to read the novel. But why on earth go on making these inevitably tedious transcriptions of popular sagas? There is nothing in them at all filmable. At the best (and this piece has its merits) we are regaled with a charade of old fashions and weird accents, courtings, apprenticeships, death-beds innumerable, the damned Family getting grander, and the infernal Mill (or whatever it happens to be) making ready for its melodramatic climax. In *Muster of Bunkdom*—to render it phonetically—all the looms come crashing down from a top floor, where they have been providently lodged by a villainous uncle. But that is only after years of waiting. Mr. Stephen Murray as this family blacksheep gives the one full-blooded performance of the piece, which is thinly episodic. The others struggle more or less effectively with mock-Yorkshire, family pride, unwanted babies, and the passing years. I don't know the original, but it is the kind of percolating fiction that in a terse medium is almost bound to strike false. Only Dickens, in my experience, has survived such boiling down into celluloid, and that only once.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

OPERATION PLOUGHSHARE

Mr. Bevin's forthcoming speech in the wartime Churchill style will probably be followed by another from Mr. Isaacs in the Monty manner.

We're going to have a most terrific party,
All ranks and classes must be hard and tough;
Field rations will be less but I'm certain of success
If you are keen and hard and tough enough.
There'll be a real rough house before it's over,
We can't afford to live in luxury's lap,
But we've got the Crisis Bill to ginger up the drill—
You've got to fight the Battle of the Gap.

The export-import gap is getting wider,
I count on all to put up a good show,
Our side will always win through pep plus discipline
We're moving up to give the knock-out blow.
The tasks of our industrial shock-formations
Divisional commanders will divulge;
Clear the import bulge away is The Order of the Day—
You've got to win the Battle of the Bulge.

The belts of Labour Forces must be tightened,
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Correspondence

THE POLICE AND THE FASCISTS

SIR,—May I supplement Mr. Pritt's excellent account of how the police are acting at Fascist meetings by a few practical hints?

When a heckler or questioner in the circumstances described is asked by a police officer for his name and address, he should ask whether he is "reasonably suspected" of any and, if so, what offence. If the officer does not give an affirmative and informed answer to this question the citizen should refuse to give the details asked for.

If the answer is affirmative, the citizen should then ask whether it is the officer's intention to supply the information to the chairman of the meeting; if it is, again the details should be refused. If the officer disclaims that intention, the details should be supplied but the officer's number should be taken and his future movements *vis-à-vis* the chairman of the meeting should be carefully watched.

After this backchat, the citizen will probably have been arrested anyhow. Police who guard Fascists take short shift of citizens—especially if they look poor ("Communist") or are dark-skinned ("Jew") —who stand on their legal rights; certainly he will be arrested if he refuses to give the information demanded. In any such case, the charge will be "obstruction of the police in the execution of their duty." As Mr. Pritt has shown, the citizen will have a complete answer to this charge since the policeman concerned will have been acting extra-legally and not in the execution of his duty," and it follows that refusal to supply the information wrongly demanded cannot constitute "obstruction."

In every case, the citizen concerned, when brought before the Magistrate, should apply for an adjournment and should at once communicate with the National Council of Civil Liberties, 11A King's Road, W.3, (SLO 5279) for advice and free legal aid in appropriate cases.

52B Oxford Road, N.W.6. O. H. PARSONS

PRIVILEGED MINERS

SIR,—Mr. Herbert Morrison said on Saturday that we have already given very great advantages and privileges to the miners." It is important that the public understand exactly what these "advantages and privileges" amount to. This is not only a matter of fairness to the miners. There is a real danger of the Government and the nation kidding themselves that a policy of special incentives and priority for the miners has been tried and proved a failure.

The improvements gained by the miners so far under the Labour Government would appear to be these:—

1. Bank Holidays are now paid for. Miners, however, still get only one week's annual paid holiday.

2. The miner is now entitled to a guaranteed weekly wage; this continues the arrangement under the Essential Work Order. This important reform is not peculiar to the miners, most industries having concluded such agreements in the past two years.

3. The miner is no longer required to contribute to the running of pithead baths—he is now able to wash himself at the employer's expense, a concession to which factory workers have long been entitled under the Factories Act.

4. The miner gets 2s. 4d. meat ration against the ordinary worker's 1s. 2d. It must be remembered, however, that it is often inconvenient, if not impossible, for him to eat meals in a canteen.

5. Finally, there has been one really important improvement: the five-day working week. From May 1st, 1947, the miner who worked five days in the week was to receive the same wage as he formerly received for six. If he missed one shift, even owing to sickness, and worked four, he would be paid only for four shifts—i.e., he would lose the "bonus shift." Here, again, the miner is not in any special privileged position: many other industries have made arrangements shortening the working week in the last year. None, so far as I know, have incorporated the principle of a penalty for losing time.

On the other side of the picture it should be noted that the miners have had no increase in weekly wage rates since the spring of 1944—a period during which retail prices have risen by 9 per cent and the general index of weekly wage rates in all industries by 17 per cent. The minimum wage underground is still only £5—or £5 6s. for a skilled man—and something like half those underground have no chance of piecework earnings above this minimum.

The British miners have actually produced more coal per head in the five-day week than in the preceding six-day week—5.03 tons in May and June, 1947, against 4.9 in April. They are nearer their pre-war output per shift than any country in Europe.

Man-power in the mines, which rose in the first half of 1947, is now stagnant at a level 12,000 below the Government's minimum target for 1947. Unless drastic steps are taken it will once again begin to fall. The 60,000 a year who leave the pits through age, sickness or injury, cannot be replaced simply by conscripting unwilling men.

There is no mystery about this: the obvious remedy has never been tried. Let the miners really be given "great advantages and privileges" to offset the dangers and hardships of their job—better compensation, better wages, pensions from the industry, income tax relief. This could be done tomorrow—just as the Saturday overtime work would be given by the miners tomorrow—if the Government were not concerned primarily with keeping down the costs, or with making a good impression on the American investor. It is time to recognise that these men must be treated as the nation's most essential citizens —at the expense of the rentiers, and, if need be, of the comfortable black-coated worker.

MARGOT HEINEMANN

Labour Research Department.

RUHR VALLEY AUTHORITY

SIR,—I read with very great interest the article in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of August 2nd, putting forward a very strong case for the immediate establishment of a Ruhr Valley Authority based on similar principles to those of the Tennessee Valley Scheme. This suggestion certainly seems to provide an answer to at least some of the major problems in the Ruhr area. Perhaps we shall even see one day large schemes of a similar nature established for the Valleys of the Danube and the Rhine.

Meantime I suggest that the Socialist Party in this country could well benefit from the careful study of the T.V.A. system of administration as built up by David Lilienthal. In any scheme for State control one of the principal dangers to be faced is that of over-centralisation and lack of flexibility in administration, with the continual strangulation of personal initiative and responsibility amongst the junior and local staffs in consequence. The T.V.A. has, however, managed to subjugate individual interests to those of the community as a whole and still preserve the individual responsibility and executive powers of its officials, who are able to make quick decisions on the spot where necessary, without the interminable delays caused by reference back to higher authorities.

With the T.V.A. there is no top-heavy staff of administrative officials remote from the scene of action, because Lilienthal always insisted on what he called the grass roots principle, which means that the inspiration of the T.V.A. administration comes upwards from the bottom (or grass roots) instead of downwards from a bureaucratic top.

A Socialist Administration based on this T.V.A. idea might well provide a system for this country which would have all the advantages of State control without losing all those other advantages derived

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from personal enterprise. At the same time Britain might provide the world with an attractive economic alternative to both the private enterprise of the United States and the communism of Soviet Russia.

C. CADBURY

LANDWORKERS' UNION

SIR,—Ian Darges' letter contains a curious idea of the Trade Union Movement—a year's subscription—something towards the political fund—and then wait for the postman to call.

Agricultural workers *are* organised here in mid-Sussex: they are in six branches (for their convenience) within a radius of five miles of this town. They are affiliated to the Haywards Heath and District Trades Council, and play their full part in a Movement of which we are justly proud.

Delegates are sent to higher levels of the Movement, and to every local organisation that matters, including Government Committees and local government, in an endeavour to improve the economic and social conditions of all that work.

When Ian Darges returns to the land and to the Agricultural Workers Union (it is hoped that he will do both) his co-operation will be welcomed, and in return the postman will call—quite often.

69 Western Road, Haywards Heath. LAURENCE BURTENSHAW, *President*, Sussex Federation of Trades Councils.

YOUTH FESTIVAL

SIR,—As a young scientist without party affiliations who attended the Prague Youth Festival as an individual representing only himself, I should like to bring up a point I consider very important.

Various reports are appearing in the Press to the effect that the Festival was Communist-dominated. It must be realised in this connection that the Festival was a cultural one and not a political meeting. The reason for the tendency towards Communist preponderance was the unquestionably better organisation of the delegations from Eastern countries and the high standard of their theatrical and other performances compared to those of Western countries. The British contingent especially, in spite of much hard work by the organisers, arrived as a largely disorganised mass of individuals with relatively very little to offer in the cultural sphere which was the backbone of the Festival.

A further most important reason lies squarely on the shoulders of the Labour Party, whose Labour League of Youth was not allowed to send a delegation. The British contingent was therefore lopsided, with the biggest, the Government, party not represented. In addition, it appears that the United States authorities adopted the same attitude, and only a few Americans, much to their personal credit, succeeded in overcoming the obstacles deliberately put in their way.

The situation at the Festival was consequently such that the only "Iron Curtain" to be discovered there was one consciously created by the West and *not* the East. One is left to ponder how far the same is true of the other "Iron Curtain" which is supposed to be dividing Europe at present. It is to the great discredit of the Labour Party especially that it should have hindered the free and informal mixing of young people of all nations and more particularly of Eastern and Western Europe, which the Festival provided, and thereby knocked away one of the most vital corner-stones of international co-operation—a cause it so vehemently supports with words.

J. B.

YUGOSLAVIA

SIR,—I have recently returned from a holiday in Yugoslavia, and I heartily endorse Mr. Vallance's impression.

We were ordinary trippers and had no special consideration shown us, but we had freedom to move about as we wished, on foot or in lorries or trains. There was no casual demand to see our papers and we were unconscious of the police; much more so, let me add, than one was in France in the '30s, or in Germany under the Weimar Republic. I confess, we were *once* challenged by the military—when we went exploring up the hill behind Split and came upon a half-ruined fortress manned, so far as we could see, by two very young marines who rang the alarm bell and, after a long wait, came down, exchanged a few friendly words with us, shook hands and told us how to find the path round the other side; they did not ask to see our passports.

Communication with Yugoslavs was limited only by language difficulties, and these were not insurmountable. There was a great friendliness and readiness to talk, and an atmosphere of confidence and enthusiasm in spite of material hardship such as most of us in England have never known. This keenness and confidence was evident wherever we went, in the streets and restaurants, and above all in the gay and noisy crowds which overfilled the lorries which often do duty as buses.

A brief holiday is, admittedly, not enough to prove anything (though I think that any roaming traveller with normal perception and experience would be likely to notice if there existed any foundation for Mr. Krnjevic's jaundiced view of his country, which, one guesses, he has not visited recently); but this superficial impression was confirmed by two encounters with English residents from Belgrade.

Neither of them was consciously "political." One was the wife of a British official, living there for the last six months. She could speak Serbian and had been in contact with the reactionary as well as the progressive elements in Belgrade. What amazed her, she said, was the extraordinary degree of tolerance shown by the present Government. The other was a man—typical Diplomatic Service type, with just such views about English politics as one could foresee. He had been in Yugoslavia on a trade mission for the last few months, and expressed an almost startling admiration for the country—its Government, and the spirit of its people from whom, he thought, we in England could learn so much. He was particularly hopeful that something of that spirit might be brought back home by the boys and girls who have helped with the Youth Railway.

C. BALCHIN

STEEL

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a letter in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of 9th August signed by Mr. Davis Murray.

In the course of this letter he says with regard to raw material for the production of steel we consistently throw away two to three millions of tons every year.

The Merchant Members of this Federation will be interested to know where and how this two or three million tons of recoverable scrap is, and how it can be made available.

H. E. CRAWFORD

National Federation of Scrap Iron, Steel and Metal Merchants, 33-34 Chancery Lane, W.C.2.

DAS KAPITAL

SIR,—Following up Mr. Bernard Shaw's letter in a recent issue, the following facts may be of interest to your readers. Although Marx may have been exploded by Mr. Shaw and other authorities, he has astonishing vitality, and so much so that before the war we had two translations available of volume one of *Capital*. One translation was the famous Moore-Aveling one (which, confidentially, is regarded as the *édition définitif, textus receptus*, or what you will, by English Communists); the other was by Eden and Cedar Paul.

We regret that Mr. Shaw had to pay £3 17s. 6d. for his set of three volumes. By his own admission volume one contains the cream of Marx, and we are happy to say that a handsome reprint of the Moore-Aveling translation is now again available. It is well set, annotated up to date by Dona Torr, and for its 880 pages the student will have to pay a mere 15s.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE is an important book still to be written about the great Victorian fantasts—a book that, besides tracing their connection with the past and with the reports of other travellers through the universal dream-world, would seek to determine the qualities they shared, and the origin of those qualities both in their personal characteristics and in their literary and social period. Among artists and writers to be discussed, one thinks immediately of Richard Doyle, a draughtsman of fantastic exuberance, whose executive ability was matched by his imaginative oddity: of Lewis Carroll, alias Dodgson, who seems "curiouser and curiouser" the more attentively we contemplate him: and of Edward Lear, a melancholy gadabout, dreaming and grumbling his way through life with Old Foss, his cat, and Georgio Kokali, his devoted Albanian servant. In many respects strikingly dissimilar, they bear, nevertheless, a decided family resemblance. Each was a celibate. Doyle's aversion from marriage is said to have been due to his romantic attachment to a beautiful young married woman, of exemplary virtue and exalted worldly station, from whom he parted, after confessing his love and ascertaining that it was not unreturned, with a mutual determination that they must never meet again. Subsequently Doyle developed a strain of militant Catholic puritanism; and in contrast to the gaiety of his drawings was his refusal to illustrate *Gulliver's Travels* (which, no doubt, he would have done admirably) because he considered it an indecent and irreligious volume. The eccentricities of Lewis Carroll—even in Oxford and at a time when donnish eccentricity was by no means disapproved of—caused surprise among his circle of friends; for, although the Victorians, maybe quite rightly, saw no harm in an unmarried clergyman surrounding himself with attractive little girls, and passing his leisure hours like the blameless Grand Turk of an innocent seraglio, the energy with which he flung himself into their pursuits proved often somewhat disconcerting. His acquaintances were taken aback when they entered his rooms to find them apparently deserted, and then watched him emerge from beneath the table, on all fours, playing bears or wolves, his little favourites gambolling round him. His emotional bias was obviously peculiar; and it is recorded of Lewis Carroll that, as soon as the children he loved showed signs of maturity, he was apt at once to drop them. Edward Lear (of whom Mr. Angus Davidson gave us some years ago an interesting full-length portrait) was a sociable and bustling extravert. A lover of children, he was also a man of the world, travelled widely, worked indefatigably, and made many adult friends with whom he kept up a lively correspondence. But, in spite of his sociability and his extraordinary gift for work—during a six months' tour of India he sent home no fewer than 560 drawings, large and small, nine small sketch books and four journals—his character, too, had its mysterious and tormented side. He was an epileptic and suffered, moreover, from chronic asthma and bronchitis. Though he secured a fair share of the sunshine, he would appear never to have been quite at home, quite at his ease, in the world in which he found himself. Life—the ordinary conditions of day-to-day existence — presented problems that he could neither ignore nor solve, an abundance of rubs and irritations that he could never learn to take for granted. There was the problem of marriage, the troublesome enigma of the relation of the sexes. . . . "We have no evidence," writes Mr. Holbrook Jackson in his lucid and informative preface to Lear's *Complete Nonsense*,* "that he was attracted to women except as friends, and his works, literary and graphic, are as sexless as the artistic efforts of a child." But we must assume that his relative insensiblity often slightly disappointed him; and he was inclined to worry about his possible losses and, perhaps rather over-emphatically, count his blessings as a celibate, reflecting that were he married he would paint "less and less well" and declaring that the mere thought of "annual infants" drove him nearly frantic. Yet conceivably there *was* something to be said (it struck him once in Corfu) for marriage to a "clever good nice fat little Greek girl," who had "25 olive trees, some goats and a house." As fate willed it, "the above girl, happily for herself, likes somebody else"; and Lear slipped back into his accustomed round, and into the state of benign perplexity and jocose irascibility that seemed his natural element.

His protests, it is true, were vehement and incessant; but they were almost always tempered with humour—or softened by facetiousness—and delivered in a form that reflected as much upon himself as on the condition of the universe. Noise infuriated him. Thus, in Rome, besides being provoked to frenzy by Manning's "most atrocious sermons," he was reduced to distraction by an odious operatic neighbour, "a vile beastly rottenheaded foolbegotten pernicious priggish screaming, tearing, roaring, perplexing, sphitmecrackle, crachimecriggle insane ass of a woman . . . practising howling downstairs with a brute of a singing master so horribly, that my head is nearly off." In Switzerland, the children at the hotel, "forty ill-conducted little beasts," caused him to curse the species; while in Paris he complained of the cats—though for cats, at least as personified in Old Foss, he had the utmost veneration—"four hundred and seventy-three . . . making an infernal row in the garden close to my window." But it was to his own character that he eventually returned: he was a "queer beast," he remarked, an "asinine beetle," and he could not understand why so many friends tolerated him. This self-deprecatory refrain creeps into his nonsense verse. In all the best of those incomparable productions, there presently emerges an uncouth and lonely figure—a Dong or a Pobble or a Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò—who strays across the dream-landscape with an air of romantic disenchantment, bound on some endless quest or impelled by the recollection of some mysterious sorrow:

> And now each night, and all night long,
> Over those plains still roams the Dong;
> And above the wail of the Chimp and Snipe
> You may hear the squeak of his plaintive pipe . . .
> And all who watch at the midnight hour,
> From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,
> Cry, as they trace the Meteor bright,
> Moving along through the dreary night,
> "This is the hour when forth he goes,
> The Dong with a luminous Nose!
> Yonder—over the plain he goes;
> He goes!
> He goes;
> The Dong with a luminous Nose!"

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this figure is Lear himself, or bears the same relation to Lear that Childe Harold bore to Byron, a symbol of his disillusionment, a projection of his own interior restlessness. Among the poems that I personally enjoy most, there is only one on which the romantic shadow does not fall. Uncle Arly comes to a lugubrious end:

> So for three-and-forty winters,
> Till his shoes were worn to splinters,
> All those hills he wander'd o'er,
> Sometimes silent; sometimes yelling;
> Till he came to Borley-Melling,
> Near his old ancestral dwelling;
> (But his shoes were far too tight.)
>
> On a little heap of Barley
> Died my aged uncle Arly,
> And they buried him one night;
> Close beside the leafy thicket;
> There, his hat and Railway-Ticket;
> There, his ever-faithful Cricket;
> (But his shoes were far too tight.)

The Pobble's excursion terminates in disaster; and Yonghy-Bonghy Bò, irremediably crossed in love, bids a Byronic farewell to the pleasant coast he had inhabited:

> Down the slippery slopes of Myrtle,
> Where the early pumpkins blow,
> To the calm and silent sea
> Fled the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
> There, beyond the Bay of Gurtle,
> Lay a large and lively Turtle;
> 'You're the Cove,' he said, 'for me.
> 'On your back beyond the sea,
> 'Turtle, you shall carry me!'
> Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
> Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
>
> Through the silent-roaring ocean
> Did the Turtle swiftly go;
> Holding fast upon his shell
> Rode the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
> With a sad primaeval motion
> Towards the sunset isles of Boshen
> Still the Turtle bore him well.
> Holding fast upon his shell,
> 'Lady Jingly Jones, farewell!'
> Sang the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
> Sang the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat provide a lyrical exception. Their journey alone—a journey is usually hinted at or described in Edward Lear's poems: he was himself an inveterate traveller, and incurably explorative—winds up with lover's meeting and with the marriage of true minds, as the ill-assorted yet harmonious pair dance hand-in-hand down a shimmering beach beneath the tropic moonlight. Otherwise the note of frustration prevails—attenuated and subtilised by the climate of the dream-world, yet none the less perceptible; for our waking thoughts are bound to invade our dreams, and there is no lasting escape, even in fantasy, from the painful stresses and strains of everyday experience.

Fantasy, that is to say, must remain anchored to reality. And, whereas the haphazard experimentation of Surrealist writers and painters have shown how tediously insignificant may be the results of undirected and uncensored dreaming, we notice that the greatest masters of fantasy (to some of whom the Surrealists themselves have paid a patronising tribute) combined imaginative hardihood with a considerable inheritance of intellectual discipline. Doyle, like Grandville, was a commercial draughtsman; Carroll a mathematician; and Lear a hard-worked topographical and zoological illustrator. Carroll's philosophical and mathematical interests appear, though briefly and fleetingly, both in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*; and Lear's exploration of the miraculous universe of plants and birds and animals gives his imaginary *flora* and *fauna* a remarkable air of accuracy and verisimilitude. It is by his verses that Edward Lear will always be remembered, for nowhere else does the peculiar quality of his imagination—mocking yet plaintive, ludicrous yet elegiac—reveal itself so clearly; but among the most fascinating features of the present volume of his collected nonsense are the three sections of *Nonsense Botany*, sandwiched among a variety of better-known rhymes and pictures. For some tastes they may be a little too whimsical; but the whimsicality of the effect is redeemed by its breath-taking extravagance. One is reminded of Bosch or Breughel, of witches' sabbaths and Temptations of St. Anthony, in which *homunculi* creep out of eggs, half-human fishes crawl with legs on dry land, and sinister domestic utensils peer with glassy orbs from crevices. The inspiration is the same. How strangely different the handling of it! The moral influence of the Victorian age, disinfecting, refining, has extended even to the land of nightmares; yet the innocence of the symbolism and the prosaic neatness of the draughtsmanship make Lear's botanical specimens still more odd and terrifying. A plant blossoms in a slug, the *Sophtshuggia Glutinosa*. Delicate stems are garlanded with boots and shoes, or burst into pigs and fiddles, blue-bottles, combs, knives and forks, buns, tea-kettles and barking dogs. *Pollybirdia Singularis* (of which the petals are formed of five impassive parakeets), *Cockatooca Superba* and *Manypeeplia Upsidownia* are exotics that would not be out of place in the man-eating vegetation of an Amazonian jungle.

I have suggested that the figure of Lear himself haunts his own mythology—the Mr. Lear whom it was "pleasant to know" (or so he was inclined to hope), with his spectacles and his bushy beard

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* *The Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear.* Edited by HOLBROOK JACKSON. *Faber*, 12s. 6d.

and his loud and grumbling prejudices, the eccentric bachelor who pottered around San Remo wearing a white mackintosh, pursued by derisive Italian children who imagined that the crazy old Englishman had come out in his night-gown. Certainly his sense of the strangeness of life (which he could scarcely hope to express in the meticulous representation of foreign birds and landscapes) escaped and overflowed into his nonsense verse and pictures; and it was the mixture of adult perplexity and childish sensibility that gave his imaginative escapades their special grace and brilliance. Always a wanderer, never entirely happy, he was disposed to think of contentment as a "loathsome slimy humbug—fit only for potatoes, very fat hogs—and fools generally. Let us pray fervently (he wrote) that we may never become such asses as to be contented." But, although the gift of happiness eluded him, he had possessions of far greater value—the faculty of wonder and the innocent eye of youth. They continued to sustain and enlighten him during the whole course of his long and rambling pilgrimage.

PETER QUENNELL

NEW NOVELS

Eustace and Hilda. By L. P. HARTLEY. *Putnam.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Mountain Village. By CHUN-CHAN YEH. *Sylvan Press.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

For the Rest of Our Lives. By DAN DAVIN. *Nicholson & Watson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Delta Wedding. By EUDORA WELTY. *Lane.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Hidden Faces. By SALVADOR DALI. *Nicholson & Watson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

With *Eustace and Hilda*, Mr. Hartley's trilogy, which I take to be one of the very few masterpieces in contemporary fiction—I use the word deliberately, having in mind the dictionary definition, "consummate piece of workmanship"—reaches its conclusion. It began, readers of *The Shrimp and the Anemone* will recall, with the words: "'Eustace! Eustace!' Hilda's tones were always urgent." But Eustace was bent over the pool on the beach, watching the shrimp being eaten by the anemone:

> His heart bled for the shrimp, he longed to rescue it; but, on the other hand, how could he bear to rob the anemone of its dinner? . . . If he took the shrimp away, the anemone might never catch another, and die of hunger. But while he debated the unswallowed part of the shrimp grew perceptibly smaller.

The first paragraph, then, of the first book, fixes Eustace for us: the gentle, sensitive, over-scrupulous little boy already obsessed with problems of morals and behaviour; fixes, too, his relationship with his sister—for who is Hilda if not the anemone, and who Eustace if not the shrimp?—and his ultimate destiny. By the end of *The Shrimp and the Anemone* the small boy has inherited a fortune. By the end of *The Sixth Heaven* he has achieved his dearest ambition, the betrothal of Hilda, that stern, beautiful, absorbed worker for socially worthy causes, to his hero the young aristocratic M.P., Dick Staveley, and he himself been taken up by Dick's aunt Lady Nelly.

Eustace and Hilda opens with Lady Nelly awaiting Eustace's arrival as her guest in Venice; and the first half of the book is a wonderfully delicate evocation of the effect of that city, which has inspired so much fine prose in English writers, on the awakening mind of Eustace. One says "awakening" advisedly, for throughout the three books his mind is continually unfolding: shy as he is, and naïve, he has all the same an enormous capacity for certain kinds of experience, the æsthetic and what for want of a better kind one must call the mystical. But all the time, through all his innocent dalliance in Venice, "'Eustace! Eustace!'" he hears, and the tones are always urgent. The worst happens, the engagement between Hilda and Dick is broken, Hilda is stricken with paralysis of the kind the psycho-analysts call conversion-hysteria, and Eustace must hasten to England to be with her, to cure her with a desperate shock-therapy of his invention, and then to die himself of heart-failure in his sleep.

For readers new to Mr. Hartley a word of warning is necessary. *The Sixth Heaven* could be read without reference to *The Shrimp and the Anemone*, but *Eustace and Hilda* demands knowledge of the previous work. One hopes that as soon as possible the trilogy will be published in a single volume, for it is plain now that it is not a sequence of three separate novels, as Bennett's Clayhanger books were for instance, but is a whole and has been designed as such, as one novel. Which is as one could have expected, for one of the chief sources of the pleasure we derive from Mr. Hartley's work is its formal excellence, that rarest quality in English fiction; as from the novels of James, a whole æsthetic of the novel could be derived from the Eustace trilogy.

Then there is Eustace himself. Since *The Way of All Flesh* the pages of English fiction have been crowded with sensitive and artistic young men. Two or three of them are great creations, and many memorable. None has been drawn with such delicate comedy or with such sunny urbanity as Eustace, none is so charming and appealing.

One could profitably devote one's whole space to the consideration of Mr. Hartley, of his sense of comedy, for instance, or the sureness of his character-creation; but *The Mountain Village* and *For the Rest of Our Lives* also demand attention, for they are impressive novels. Mr. Yeh's novel of peasant life in a remote Chinese village in the twenties is written in a beautifully pellucid English that almost any English novelist could envy. Mr. Yeh's first book was called *The Ignorant and The Forgotten*, and the ignorant and the forgotten, the exploited and the injured, are still his characters. His peasants—and how shrewdly and economically they are drawn—scratch a living from the earth when the seasons are equable, but recurrent drought and famine mean that they fall ever more deeply into debt to their landlords. A Communist rising frees them and gives them the land, but when the reactionary armies force the Communists to retreat they are left in greater misery than before. Yet reading Mr. Yeh, misery is not what one is primarily aware of. He tells his story with a detachment, with an irony and a humour that are closely akin to love; gently, almost pastorally, despite the violence of the action. Mr. Yeh, one suspects, has learned from Turgeniev. "After the sun had completely disappeared the western hills became simply patches of diluted ink in the evening landscape of a classical painting." In his English novel of modern China Mr. Yeh achieves something of the quality and tranquillity of Chinese painting.

His novel is a re-creation of experience twenty years past; Mr. Davin's is written out of immediate experience. It is a powerful, intense, unrelentingly honest book, a picture of one particular period and front of the war, the campaign in the desert from the autumn of 1941 to just after the fall of Tunis. It seems to me easily the finest novel that has yet come out of the war; whoever wants to know what fighting in the desert was like need go no further than this book. The point of view from which it is told is complex and unusual: Mr. Davin's three heroes are New Zealanders and intellectuals, which means they are quite unlike the conventional notion of English intellectuals, quite without their inhibitions, though with inhibitions of their own. One is aware in reading that one is in the presence of a new kind of mind, which fascinates and also repels; it is as though Macaulay's New Zealander has at last arrived, and his attitude to the ruins of London is ambivalent. Much of the strength of the novel comes from this; indeed, the real hero is none of the individual officers through whose eyes the action is seen, but the Second New Zealand Division itself. Most of the weaknesses seem to me to arise out of the fact that the principal characters are intellectuals, speaking too much in the same terms and the same tone of voice. Indeed, they often seem like personified aspects of a single person; Tom, the militant Marxist, the man of faith the author that might have been and for whom he still has more than a sneaking regard; Frank, the sceptic and scholar, the man he is; Tony, the gay uncomplicated character, the man he would like to be. The women in the story, the mistresses and pick-ups in Cairo, I found dull and scarcely alive, probably because, in the nature of things, their existence is marginal to the main action and at the most a complication in the solution of the moral problem that is the core of the novel, the problem of a soldier's duty in war, whether to work in an important but safe job at the base or fight with his friends at the front. An episode I found very successful and most moving was Mr. Davin's study of the tragedy of the homosexual officer Nigel.

Delta Wedding takes us into the Deep South, the world's looniest and most sinister literary region: old men fighting the Civil War in the upper rooms of the decayed house, poor whites raping their sisters in the cotton, and niggers in the woodpile. Miss Welty, previously known as an excellent short story writer, doesn't set out to rival Faulkner and Caldwell, but, even if there are only two half-wits in her novel and only two cases of senility, hers is recognisably their world. *Delta Wedding* is a study of a planter family, the Fairchilds, during the week of the wedding of one of the daughters. Miss Welty evidently aims at expressing a special quality of being which she finds in the Fairchilds:

> Things waited for them to appear, laughing to one another and amazed, in order to happen. They were forever, by luck or intuition, opening doors, discovering things, little or cherished things, running pell-mell down the stairs to meet people, ready to depart for vague and spontaneous occasions . . . They were never too busy for anything, they were generously and almost seriously of the moment . . .

A breathless existence; and I found it a breathless book. At its best, despite the great difference of setting and language, it has a fairy-tale quality reminiscent of Miss Sitwell's early work, an impression only partly prompted by the family Christian names, India, Bluett, Orrin, Battle, Aunt Tempe, Troy, Shelley, Lady Clare. But mostly I found the book too much like an impressionist painting to which one has not found the right angle of vision. There is obviously intense light, great heat, dazzling colour and much movement, but what lies beneath the wonderful iridescence of the surface is another matter. My own view is—merely the Deep South all over again.

Almost any passage picked out at random will serve to show the quality of M. Dali's novel.

> Each triumphant chariot of perversion passed across his vision, drawn by different creatures, by druids crowned with leaves bearing Arabic topaze vases of "liquid desires," unicorns with feminine rumps, bulls white as foam, lions with the faces of angels . . . Cécile and Lady Chidester-Ames dressed in sea-cow skins opened the procession, applying their whips of myrtle branches that left myrtle-shaped marks on the innumerable flesh of the slaves of his mistresses, to whom Grandsailles now self-indulgently gave the names of famous lovers of antiquity—Celta Morgana who turned into a river of milk, Alimbrica with the white gums, the gentle Hemophia who loved blood, Corina with the breasts of a child, and Nacrea!

M. Dali is at the head of the queue for inclusion in a footnote of any future edition of *The Romantic Agony*. His novel purports to be a novel of the contemporary scene, of the fall of France, of the Resistance, of modern America. Its hero, the Count of Grandsailles, is sufficiently accomplished in black magic to be able to have sexual intercourse—through a familiar, it must be admitted—with a lady four thousand miles away. The book is both funny and vulgar, as though Ouida had read and digested Sade and Huysmans. M. Dali claims to have discovered a new perversion, "the synthesis and sublimation" of sadism and masochism. He calls it "cledalism," after the name of his heroine. It turns out to be that love which, though spurned, is faithful unto death. Mr. Haakon Chevalier's translation seems excellent.

WALTER ALLEN

THOUGHTS AND DEEDS IN RUSSIA

The Spirit of Post-war Russia. By RUDOLF SCHLESINGER. *Dennis Dobson.* 8s. 6d.

I have learnt more about the Soviet Union from Dr. Rudolf Schlesinger's new study of Soviet ideology than from any book since Sir John Maynard's *The Russian Peasant*. Dr. Schlesinger is original, objective, realistic and very well informed, but English is not his native language, and it is to be feared that his Teutonic style will prevent *The Spirit of Post-war Russia* from receiving the wide attention that it deserves.

Dr. Schlesinger is very sympathetic towards what the rulers of Soviet Russia are trying to do, but he thinks that "more harm has probably been done to the U.S.S.R. by those of its friends who attempted to describe its present state as a realisation of all conceivable human ideals than could be done by anti-Soviet propaganda if the latter" had not been given a perfect opening for making "cheap comparisons between ideal and reality."

Dr. Schlesinger points out that in Russia the period of unbroken Bolshevik rule contains several separate phases, which in other revolutions were marked by changes of Government. In Russia each phase has been forced to birth by the merciless pressure of events and the attempt to explain every change in terms of the ideals of 1917 is bound to fog the issue.

This does not mean that the fundamental aims of 1917 have been abandoned but it does mean, that if Lenin had lived, he would have been forced to do most of the things that Stalin has done. It is not easy for a westerner to understand how much of what goes on in the Soviet Union is the result of a desperate struggle to survive.

This has, among other things, warped the whole intellectual and spiritual life of the Soviet Union. It is therefore impossible to understand, for instance, the Soviet attitude to the arts without allowing for the effect of pressures and shortages. But to understand does not mean to applaud and I, for one, cannot join with those who think that the Soviet Union has found a higher truth and a more useful beauty. But I do think that, as the Soviet Union begins to come out of its material difficulties, the relaxation of pressure may pave the way for better things in the spheres of the intellect and the spirit.

The great hope for Russia lies in two things; first, in the development of a sound tradition of law and administration and, secondly, in the reabsorbtion of traditional moral and spiritual values. And such old-fashioned values as the family and human personality are already re-inshrined.

Dr. Schlesinger's remarks about Soviet law are illuminating and make one wish to read his earlier book *Soviet Legal Theory*. And his treatment of the relations of Bolshevism and Christianity to each other is one of the most valuable things in the book. He believes that Bolshevism is bound to oppose any form of Christianity whose other-worldly qualities predominate but, if "the spiritual forces necessary for building the new Society . . . are drawn from the traditional Christian set of Spiritual values," then the Soviet State will not "make any distinction between those who help in its creative work for this or that philosophical reason."

But Dr. Schlesinger's book is too good to be summarised in a review. His answer to the question whether the S.U. is nationalist or internationalist is the best that I have seen but, if you want to know what it is, you must buy the book.

JOHN LAWRENCE

NEW VERSE

Essay on Rime. By KARL SHAPIRO. *Secker & Warburg.* 6s.

The Signal to Engage. By ALEX COMFORT. *Routledge.* 5s.

Living in Time. By KATHLEEN RAINE. *Poetry London.* 6s.

The Divided Ways. By JOHN HEATH-STUBBS. *Routledge.* 5s.

From the Shiffolds. By R. C. TREVELYAN. *Hogarth.* 5s.

A Translation of the Idylls of Theocritus. By R. C. TREVELYAN. *Cambridge University Press.* 7s. 6d.

The Wife of Heracles. Translated by GILBERT MURRAY. *Allen & Unwin.* 5s.

MR. KARL SHAPIRO has had the audacity—and, let us add, the wit and the passion—to write a book on poetics in verse. No doubt he would have attracted more readers if he had chosen prose, but his insistences would not have been the same, and I guarantee that anyone who willingly reads *Essay on Rime* once will turn back to read it again. For what Mr. Shapiro has to say he has chosen, it seems to me, the exactly right form: a blank verse that can carry emotional weight as well as compressed orderly statement. He conveys a great deal in a very little space. How instantly, for example, this kind of writing narrows the gap between criticism and poetry:

> Keats knew that Milton took more liberties
> With diction than a lesser Englishman
> Would dare, and thought the *Paradise* a curio,
> Albeit mighty. Likewise, we may call
> The framework of the poem a fiction wrought
> Too intricately for common use. Perfection
> Is the abuse of form, but for my part
> I think the discipline of Milton's art
> The purest guide to rime. Bridges discovers
> The innumerable permutations of the line
> And indicates how by a shift of weight
> Cliffs and enormous fragments of the verse
> Are hurled headlong, or brought to rest, or stopped;
> The speed of falling angels, the travail
> Of Satan labouring upwards through chaos,
> The sweet slow step of Eve in Paradise
> Milton designs by stress and shift of stress
> And always to the count of ten. Again,
> To study metric in the *Paradise*
> Is one precise approach to count of eye.

"Rime," it must be explained, is used by Mr. Shapiro to mean poetry, and he has approached Milton through the distinction between two kinds of English metre: count by eye and count by ear. The two, he argues, have never been properly differentiated. Milton is the great exponent of the first; Shakespeare, intermittently, of the second. The peculiarity of what Mr. Shapiro calls "count by ear" is that, being largely unrecognised, it has tended to come and go with the freedom of a poet's impulse; and only in recent years its establishment by Hopkins, Eliot, and others has made clear a relationship between metre and music on the one hand, and verse rhythms and speech on the other. This is the essential change that has come over poetry in our time, and Mr. Shapiro puts it in the forefront of his argument.

I cannot elaborate in detail that argument, which proceeds from general principles to a subtle criticism of modern poets. The faults as well as the virtues of new methods are sharply defined: indeed, the three main sections of the *Essay* investigate confusions (Mr. Shapiro's word) in prosody, language, and belief. He sees Joyce and Eliot as the great innovators—the first not yet recognised as a poet, fastidiously assimilating his mass of material—appreciates Whitman, rags Auden, deplores the synthetic myth and the multiple style, exposes the "frantic unbelief" that sets the tone of so much verse written to-day. He believes, as must every true writer, that style is a decent balance between literary tradition and personal claims, and that without style there can

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MACMILLAN

be no poetry. Its disruption is hunted down here and there with a sharply satirical point:

The *Cantos* have accustomed us to find
The polyglot in the studio; our poets
Swear in the Sanscrit and the Portuguese.
We take the word of Eliot that *da-ta*
And *coco-rico* have their definitions,
And dare not smile when English is not enough.
We must have new glossarial editions.
And variora on final variora,
Headnotes and footnotes and appendiceal
Behind notes to the poem. I do not scoff,
I merely ask; I merely quote MacLeish.
Señora, it is true the Greeks are dead
And sadly add, but jabberwocky lives.

For all its clarifications, however, *Essay on Rime* is predisposed with an inveterate love of its subject. Mr. Shapiro wrote away from books while serving abroad in the American Army Medical Corps: a remarkable feat of self-application. That he is himself an original poet is proved not only by this essay in verse but by his earlier *V-Letter and Other Poems*, which introduced him a couple of years ago to English readers.

Among current bad habits of Audenism, Mr. Shapiro mentions the repeated use of abstractions: *History*, he says, meaning an indifferent or malignant God, has become especially a key-word with certain writers. And opening *The Signal to Engage*, we turn very few pages before we light upon this:

All round
the pattern of history lies from sky to sky
the darkling map where our hill's shadow moves.

Not Auden, but Audenism; though as a matter of fact this particular lapse is not typical of Mr. Alex Comfort. He is a young writer with many facets; plays, novels, and a volume of essays, as well as poetry, appear in the list of his writings. In poetry he employs a free rhetorical style with leanings towards MacLeish and Aragon. His impulse, like theirs, is in part political; most of the poems in these forty pages denounce war as useless sacrifice and life as a corruption of living. The indignation is genuine enough, and it makes for an emphatic, flowing, vivid, but unmemorable kind of speech.

I wonder sometimes if the soldiers lying
under the soil, wrapped in their coats like beggars
sleeping under an arch, their hands filled with
leaves
could take vengeance for once on the men who
sent them,
coming back like beggars, seeing the homes and the
fields
that their obedience lost to them, the men of all
countries
whether they would have anything to say
as ghosts at frosty windows to sons or brothers
other than this—"Obedience is death" . . .

One may feel that to be well and forcibly said, without being particularly stirred; repeated and varied, it grows monotonous. The other poems in the book include a "Song for Lazarus," chaotic vision of a prophet stumbling among the ruins of Europe, and, leaving war, a final ecstatic sequence "The Postures of Love." Mr. Comfort seems to me a poet of easy aptitudes who has yet to show his form, but he is certainly neither tedious to read nor without talent.

Living in Time further establishes the qualities of the author's first volume, *Stone and Flower*. Miss Kathleen Raine has far more technical skill than Mr. Comfort, and that—rather than the matter of beliefs—determines in the end that she has more to say. A single mood, that of religious quietude, of the Christian's double life and love, is explored with an exact and curious touch.

Do angels ever come this way
Or does this hard day's journey lead where angels
are,
These footsteps in the waste of time, are they the
stair
That the saints climb?

Or, lost in God's forgetfulness, are we astray
In the unreal with paper roses, ghosts,
And words whose sense is buried in the past,
And our identity a dream? . . .

As so often in a poetry of this kind, the questions are apt to be stronger than the answers. "But dreams are also true," this verse goes on, "With the pathos of the inexpressible, terrible . . ." Here, complete, is another poem from these clear-cut, eagerly watchful meditations.

There is a word at heart for the next of death,
The farthest from joy; if I could fathom it
I would from this most desolate and distant place,
bless

The maker of distances, since what divides
Me from his presence is the extent of Heaven.
Were He less high, I could not be so far.

And my unrest fathoms the deep of peace,
And by my depth downcast, Lord, you are risen,
Your love's great realm, my separation measures.

Except for a slight weakness in the last line, which rounds off while adding too little, this is a perfect example of the skill and feeling that will be found everywhere in the poems of *Living in Time*.

Mr. Heath-Stubbs has shown himself a subtle critic of nineteenth-century poets—especially of such less-regarded figures as Darley—and much of his own poetry half-belongs in spirit to that century. The "Nine Gothic Ballads," with which the present volume starts, wear a lively charm.

I am so old a king that I remember
How three oak-forests have sprouted and grown
and died
Around this hall, and the generations
Of strong young men drinking ale under the shade
of them,
But now I am content to sleep.

My beard is grown long and fine like cobwebs;
The soft dust has fallen upon my shoulders;
The mice playing round me do not heed me at all;
It's little warmth I find in these embers . . .

Taste, scholarship, the feeling for the past, the delight of giving new turns to an older mode—these are the qualities, by no means commonly found to-day, that distinguish Mr. Heath-Stubbs's work. One of the best poems in this collection is a translation of Nerval's "El Desdichado." The prop either of an original or of a composed background in literature seems often to bring out this gift most clearly; though other and more personal poems (inspired, perhaps, by his friendship with Sidney Keyes) are never less than distinguished.

One of my few literary memories of the war years is that of a catalogue of "Simple Pleasures" (I think they were called) by Mr. R. C. Trevelyan which appeared in *Horizon*. Several of the pieces in his new collection revive the same easy sensitive delight. "An Age of Horses," for example:

When I was a child I lived in an age of horses,
Of leisurely landaus and sage old coachmen,
Buses and hansom cabs.
They are all mouldered away to dust and legends,
The proud cart-horse even, with tufted fetlocks,
Is growing rare as a circus elephant.
Smock-frocks, top-hats, gold sovereigns, parasols,
The Italian with his monkey on his organ,
Candles, with whose soft lips of wax we played,
Warming-pans and four-posters—all are vanished.
To-day children and men have other cults:
Motors, gadgets, airplanes are the gods
They worship. When the last of us are gone
Even regret and memory will have perished.

I could wish that more such unpretending, calm, conversational verse were the usage. (Mr. Waley's Chinese poems deserve their purely English equivalent.) The essence, here, is a style that introduce the familiar without falling flat. Mr. Trevelyan knows his limitations and does not go beyond them. A third of his new poems are translations from Greek and Latin; to these are added now a version of the Idylls of Theocritus. They have been beautifully done into a seven-foot line which Mr. Trevelyan finds nearest to the Greek hexameter and which more

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than justifies itself by his employment of it.

Three days the South wind blew, and now to Hellespont they came,
And harboured within Propontis, where the Kiānian steers
Drive the furrow broad and deep, and wear the ploughshare bright.
So there they went on shore, and two from every bench made ready
Their evening meal; then for them all one common couch they strewed:
For there a meadow lay that gave them bedding and to spare,
And thence they cut the pointed rush and deep marsh-galingale.

The same rich resilience will be found in passages of dialogue. All these poems (including two done into prose) are a pleasure to read and make us as close as translation can to its source.

Dr. Gilbert Murray belongs to an older school whose aim it was to familiarise Greek poetry by giving it an easily acceptable English form. His rhymed couplets have come in for a good deal of criticism in recent years, but he sticks by them. The play renamed *The Wife of Heracles* is Sophocles's *Trachiniae*, and at least it provides a gracefully fashioned and scholarly interpretation for those who do not know the original.

G. W. STONIER

PATRONS

Men of Taste. By MARTIN S. BRIGGS. *Batsford.* 15s.

This book disappoints, chiefly because it has been ill planned. The great patrons of architecture have been so many that to give an adequate account of them in one volume would be impossible; and Mr. Briggs has added to his difficulties by including among his chosen team of twenty-seven not only patrons whose taste was highly dubious—Henry VIII, Napoleon, Lord Grimthorpe—but men who had no opportunity to order buildings on a grand scale, such as Pepys, Ruskin and William Morris. Consequently there is no space for any of the Russians, Germans, Austrians, Spaniards, or Portuguese, whose ostentation covered Europe with palaces, churches and monasteries from Tsarskoe Selo to the Escorial and Mafra. Mr. Briggs gives us chapters on the Duke of Marlborough, Horace Walpole, George IV and the Prince Consort; but how slight are their achievements beside Wurzburg, Dresden, Cassel or Carlsruhe! And what royal house has been more prodigal in building than the Wittelsbachs, who are not mentioned? Mr. Briggs wanted to include chapters on Hitler and Mussolini; was dissuaded by his publishers; and deplores the prejudice responsible for "the rejection of two undoubtedly wicked men on moral grounds." While he could justly claim that some of the greatest patrons have been morally atrocious, we cannot see what claim either of these dictators has to figure in the book. Mussolini indeed deserves a place among the arch-vandals; he did irreparable damage to Rome, and was hoping to continue this devastation. Fortunately he was murdered. But Mr. Briggs has included Henry VIII, who similarly destroyed far more than he constructed. On the other hand, he has not one word to say of the greatest patron of the arts that England has ever produced, Charles I.

Julius II, to whom a chapter is devoted, may be thought to typify the virtues and vices usual in patrons. Exorbitant in his appetite for splendour, and so incomparably fortunate as to find Bramante, Michelangelo and Raphael anxious to satisfy it, he allowed his truculence and inconstancy to impoverish what—in spite of these—remains the greatest achievement a single patron has ever realised. It would have been instructive to compare him with a Montefeltro or a Gonzaga who made the most of the more modest advantages he enjoyed.

The best chapters in this book are devoted to Lords Burlington and Grimthorpe. The latter is a most picturesque figure: violent and eccentric, devoured by a passion for Gothic and a hatred for the Catholic doctrines that it expresses, he has left in St. Alban's Cathedral a portentous monument to his generosity and bad taste. His biography has never been written. If Mr. Briggs had undertaken it, or if he had given us an account of the great Continental patrons of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we could have given it a welcome. The work under review is a piece of book-making unworthy of so eminent a scholar.

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The Arts. *Lund Humphries.* 10s.

The second number of *The Arts* is even better than the first, and it is deplorable that the paper-controller will not allow this publication to appear more than once a year, since it represents as no other does English interest in the various arts. Sir Kenneth Clark and Mr. Roger Hinks combine scholarship with urbanity and discrimination in their respective articles on architectural backgrounds in Italian painting and on Italian Mannerism. Mr. Benedict Nicolson is informative about Pissarro's political background, Mr. Sackville-West writes with expert enthusiasm on the Catalan composer Roberto Gerard. Mr. P. L. Heard discusses Miss Mary Kessell, Mr. Robert Medley illustrates new poems by Miss Kathleen Raine. Gide writes on Poussin, and Mr. Clive Bell upbraids with courteous wit those whom, he believes, look at pictures too hastily and therefore are less than fair to works that are not dramatic or decorative. The illustrations are well chosen and excellently reproduced, so that the whole affair reflects high credit on the editorial board, which includes two of the most regular contributors to *The New Statesman and Nation.*

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Said: "Next week, Schumann."
But when next week came
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Plays the organ
Like Orpheus,
—Or do I mean Morpheus? L. E. J.

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Takes part in,
His union with "Critic"
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Could hardly have caught on—
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Who's good for a column—
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He's heard? H. M. HOOD

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Loves an obsolescent noun:
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Out of a pun. W. STEWART

Harold Hobson,
May be Agate with knobs on,
But his allusions to Sarah,
Are much rarer. W. J. FINDLAY

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Conceivably have any part in
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Paragraphs of Critic? M. DODDERIDGE

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Is perhaps no Homer,
But quite often he's
Reminiscent of Aristophanes.
LESLIE JOHNSON

Chaps
Who follow naps
Rarely doubt
The Scout. ANDREW HOPE

Beachcomber
Is a misnomer:
He drives an Express
Sans cesse. E. W. FORDHAM

He invented Strabismus, Doc.,
Capt. Foulenough, *et hoc*
Genus omne. They caught on.
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Our Grandfathers thought that Ben Jowitt
If a thing was worth knowing would know it;
But, you see, they never knowed
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James Agate—
But it is too late.
"De mortuis . . ." (i.e. "about the dead. . . .")
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